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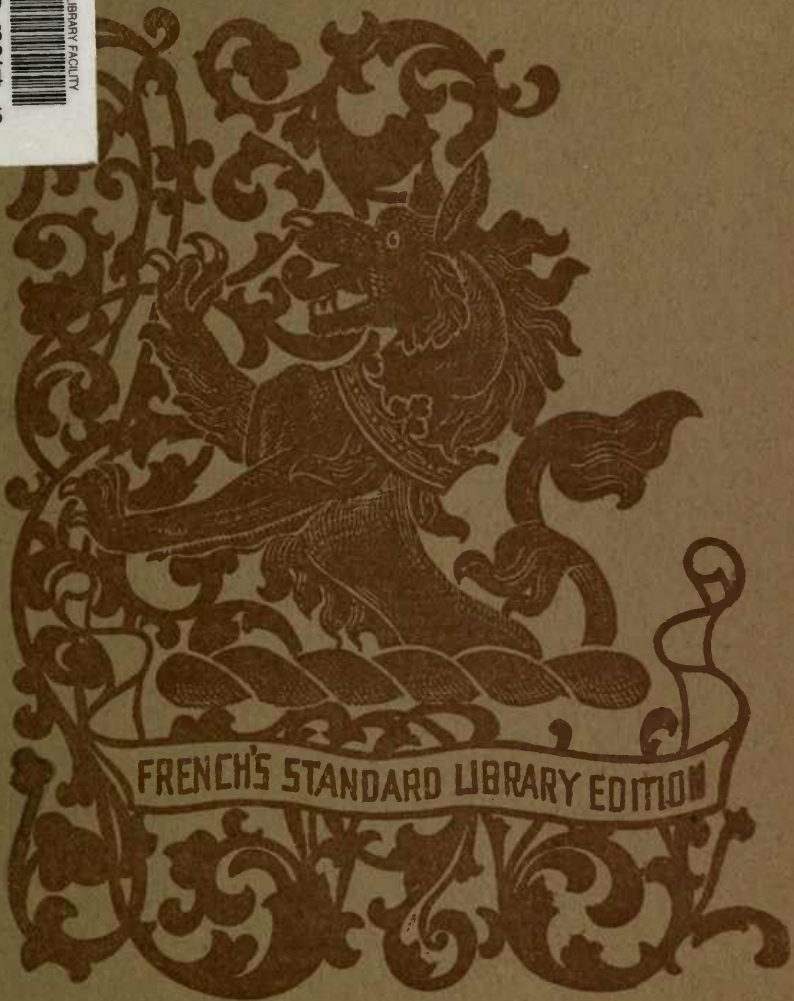
Paramount

E CHAMPION

MAS LOUDEN
THOMAS

("World's Champion")



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THE CHAMPION

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

BY

THOMAS LOUDEN

AND

A. E. THOMAS

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The following is a copy of the playbill of the first performance of "The Champion" at Longacre Theatre, New York, Monday evening, January 3rd, 1921.

SAM H. HARRIS

PRESENTS

"THE CHAMPION"

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

BY

THOMAS LOUDEN *and* A. E. THOMAS

Staged under the direction of Sam Forrest

CAST OF CHARACTERS

JANE BURROUGHS (WILLIAM'S *Mother*)...*Lucy Beaumont*
MARY BURROUGHS (*Younger Sister*).....*Rosalind Fuller*
JOHN BURROUGHS (*Father*).....*Arthur Elliott*
GEORGE BURROUGHS (*Elder Brother*)....*Frank Westerton*
DAVID BURROUGHS (*Younger Brother*).....*Gerald Hamer*
LADY ELIZABETH GALTON.....*Ann Andrews*
LORD BROCKLINGTON.....*Gordon Burby*
WILLIAM BURROUGHS .....*Grant Mitchell*
ANTOINETTE ..... *Desiree Stempel*
SIMMONS ..... *Robert Williamson*
MR. MOONEY ..... *Robert Lee Allen*
MR. COYKENDALL ..... *Harold Howard*
EARL OF CHUFFLEIGH ..... *Horace Cooper*
MARQUIS OF HARROWEEN ..... *Robert Ayrton*
BARON HOLLOWAY ..... *Robert Warwick*
MAYOR OF KNOTLEY ..... *A. P. Kaye*
FRANK SMITH ..... *Tom Williams*

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I—*Sitting room in house of* MR. BURROUGHS, *Knotley, England.*
ACT II—*Same Scene.*
ACT III—*Same Scene.*

THE CHAMPION

ACT I

SCENE: *Sitting room in house of* MR. BURROUGHS, *Knotley, England. The French windows at back are open. Through them can be seen the garden. There is a door* R. *which leads into the hall and so to the hall door of the house. Door* L. *leads to the other rooms of the house. Fireplace down* R. *and before it is a large, conspicuous rug. Table* R.C. *with telephone and books. Chairs* R. *and* L. *of table. Large couch* L. *behind which is an old-fashioned square grand piano. Pictures on walls and console table and chairs at back* R. *and* L.

When curtain rises it is late evening on a summer day.

MRS. BURROUGHS *is discovered on sofa reading a book. A basket of needlework on the piano.*

(Enter MARY C. *from garden. She is a charming young girl of seventeen or thereabouts.)*

MARY. Ah! Mother!

MRS. BURROUGHS. Is that you, Mary?

MARY. Are you reading here in the dark?

MRS. BURROUGHS. It *is* nearly dusk, isn't it, dear?

MARY. Mother, you'll ruin your eyes. *(She goes*

to electric light switch at back and switches on the rest of the lights.)

MRS. BURROUGHS. Where have you been, dear?

MARY. Over at the Rectory. And, Mother, Mrs. Archer gave me this letter for you.

MRS. BURROUGHS. Oh!

MARY. She told me I was to say that it came a week ago, but that she kept it, knowing you were visiting Aunt Lydia.

MRS. BURROGHS. Yes, dear—yes. *(She opens it rather furtively and reads it as* MARY *rattles on.)*

MARY. Mother, why should Mrs. Archer get your mail? *(Pause.)* Is it important? *(Pause.)* Can't you tell me, Mother——

MRS. BURROUGHS. *(Starting)* Oh!

MARY. What is it, Mother?

MRS. BURROUGHS. He's coming home! He's coming home!

MARY. Who's coming home?

MRS. BURROUGHS. Your dear brother Willie.

MARY. My brother Willie? Just think, Mother, I've never seen him.

MRS. BURROUGHS. You saw him, dear, when you were a child, but you can't remember him.

MARY. *(Sits on sofa* L.*)* And is that letter from him?

MRS. BURROUGHS. Yes.

MARY. But I don't understand. Why should it come through Mrs. Archer?

MRS. BURROUGHS. Oh, of course—you don't know, do you?

MARY. Know what, Mother?

MRS. BURROUGHS. Well, I think I'll just have to tell you. You're old enough to understand now—and it will be a relief. I just hate keeping a secret——

MARY. A secret! Oh, Mother! How wonderful!

MRS. BURROUGHS. —and I've had to keep this one for a long, long time. Your brother Willie ran away.

MARY. Mother!

MRS. BURROUGHS. Yes—but it was when you were very little.

MARY. But why? Why?

MRS. BURROUGHS. He couldn't get on with your father.

MARY. Oh, I can understand that.

MRS. BURROUGHS. I don't altogether blame him. He was only a lad. One night he just disappeared, and when I came down in the morning I found his good-bye note on the breakfast table. It was fifteen years ago.

MARY. But about Mrs. Archer——

MRS. BURROUGHS. Oh, yes—well—he knew there'd be trouble with your father if he knew I heard from him, so he just wrote to Mrs. Archer and asked her to give his letters secretly to me.

MARY. And you've been hearing from him all this time and no one knew it?

MRS. BURROUGHS. Yes, dear.

MARY. *(Gleefully)* Just think how angry father would be.

MRS. BURROUGHS. Oh, I know it looks very wrong of me—your father was so angry when Willie ran away—washed his hands of him for good and all—forbade all of us to hold communication with him.

MARY. Have you told George and David?

MRS. BURROUGHS. Oh, no—no—and you mustn't, either—not a word.

MARY. And now he's coming home.

MRS. BURROUGHS. Yes. He doesn't say just when, but he says it will be very soon.

MARY. What's he do? What's his business?

MRS. BURROUGHS. He *says* he's an attorney, but

I'm told that's what Americans say when they mean barrister. American slang, I suppose.

MARY. Oh, do tell me some more—it's so exciting. I want to know all about him.

(Voice is heard off right.)

MRS. BURROUGHS. Hush, dear, hush, not a word, mind.

(Enter GEORGE BURROUGHS, *followed by* MR. BURROUGHS. BURROUGHS *is a fat, pompous, domineering man of sixty.* GEORGE *is a thin, anemic Briton of thirty-two or thirty-three with the monocle habit.)*

GEORGE. I'm inclined to agree with you, pater. The working classes are getting altogether too prominent!

BURROUGHS. *(Taking up what is evidently his customary pose on the hearth rug, with his newspaper)* It really is too silly—altogether objectionable, in my opinion,—all this encouragement of the lower classes to take up sports—it simply leads them on to bet and drink—that's the long and short of it.

GEORGE. It's not as if the proletariat stood in need of exercise, either. It's got work enough to do. Heaven knows!

MARY. *(Taking election poster from piano)* Mother, I'm going to pin George's election poster on the wall. *(Gets pins from* MRS. BURROUGHS. *Puts up poster.)*

BURROUGHS. Within three days, George's photograph will adorn every blank wall in Knotley.

(Enter DAVID. *He is a few years younger than* GEORGE *and he wears the clerical uniform of the Church of England. He enters from* C. *with a letter in his hand.)*

DAVID. Letter for you, Gov'nor. *(Gives it to his father.)*

BURROUGHS. A coronet!

GEORGE. By Jove!

BURROUGHS. The Earl's crest, Jane. I heard he was in Knotley. I wrote and asked him to take pot-luck with us to-night.

MRS. BURROUGHS. How nice! I'm all in a flutter!

GEORGE. What's his Lordship say, Pater?

MRS. BURROUGHS. Do read it, John.

BURROUGHS. *(Gloomily)* I *have* read it.

MARY. *(Crosses to him)* Yes, Father, but we haven't.

BURROUGHS. *(Reads)* "Sir—I cannot take pot-luck with you to-night. Chuffleigh."

DAVID. It sounds almost rude.

MRS. BURROUGHS. Doesn't he even thank you for your kind invitation?

BURROUGHS. "Sir—I cannot take pot-luck with you to-night." (MARY *giggles.)* What are you laughing at?

MARY. *(Business. Goes up stage.)* Maybe the Earl isn't hungry.

BURROUGHS. I cannot understand it. I have exerted myself in every conceivable way to be as agreeable as possible to his Lordship—all to no effect. On the street he barely nods to me—and now—this. It's too much. It's decidedly too much. *(He crumples up the note and throws it in fireplace.)*

GEORGE. *(Sitting* L. *of table)* It's a thousand pities—especially now that Lady Elizabeth is visiting us.

MRS. BURROUGHS. It *would* have been nice—the daughter of a Marquis and the Earl of Chuffleigh—both at our table together.

BURROUGHS. It would have been gratifying—*extremely* gratifying.

MARY. I don't know what you all see in that funny little man.

BURROUGHS. Child, be quiet and allow your elders to judge. Social ambition is most praiseworthy. As you know, it is my earnest hope that when George is elected to Parliament, Lady Elizabeth will consent to become his wife.

MARY. Dear Lady Elizabeth—she's awfully poor, isn't she?

BURROUGHS. An alliance of wealth and rank. What could be more suitable? What, indeed?

MARY. *(Crosses to* GEORGE*)* George, have you asked her?

GEORGE. Certainly not! And I don't intend to till after I'm elected.

(Dressing gong sounds. GEORGE *rises and exits* R.*)*

BURROUGHS. The dressing gong. It's late tonight. Really, Jane!

MRS. BURROUGHS. I'm so sorry, John.

BURROUGHS. I trust it will not occur again.

MRS. BURROUGHS. I'll speak to Simmons.

BURROUGHS. Come, we must dress for dinner.

MARY. Mother—David's the lucky one. He doesn't have to dress.

MRS. BURROUGHS. And he would look so nice in evening clothes.

DAVID. Posibly so, Mother, but I fear I should look something worldly, too.

(Exit MRS. BURROUGHS L.*)*

BURROUGHS. Let's have no nonsense of this sort. A clergyman should always wear clerical clothes.

MARY. Except in bed, perhaps?

BURROUGHS. Quite so.

(BURROUGHS *exits* R. *and* MARY *exits* L. DAVID *crosses to* R. *Enter* LADY ELIZABETH *and* LORD BROCKINGTON *from garden* C. *They are both in riding clothes.)*

LADY ELIZABETH. Oh, David——

DAVID. Ah, Lady Elizabeth.

LADY ELIZABETH. This is my cousin, Lord Brockington. The Reverend David Burroughs, Freddy.

BROCKINGTON. How are you?

DAVID. How d'ye do, my Lord?

LADY ELIZABETH. My cousin is visiting in the neighborhood and we just happened to meet. I'm glad we found you here. A little more clerical society wouldn't do Freddy a bit of harm. *(Crosses over to* L.*)*

DAVID. Sweet of you to say so; I'm sure my mother would be charmed if you will stay and dine with us, my Lord.

BROCKINGTON. Thanks, but I really must toddle. Just want a word or two with my cousin.

LADY ELIZABETH. You see, Lord Brockington is not only my cousin, but he's the trustee of my estate—that is—he would be if there were any estate.

DAVID. Of course, if you're on business you will excuse me.

BROCKINGTON. Certainly.

DAVID. Quite sure you won't stay to dinner?

BROCKINGTON. Quite.

DAVID. Another time, perhaps.

BROCKINGTON. Perhaps.

DAVID. Er—er—charmed. *(Exit* DAVID R. BROCKINGTON *laughs loudly.)*

BROCKINGTON. Really, Betty—to find you actually visiting these blighters.

LADY ELIZABETH. Freddy, I'll thank you not to speak of my hosts like that.

BROCKINGTON. Couldn't imagine what had become of you. How long have you been here?

LADY ELIZABETH. About a fortnight.

BROCKINGTON. I hate to think of you in a place like this, and really, I've got to think about you.

LADY ELIZABETH. I should be better pleased if you'd think about getting an income for me out of my property.

BROCKINGTON. Wish I could, but you can't get blood out of a stone.

LADY ELIZABETH. People do get silver out of silver mines!

BROCKINGTON. That's the trouble. They've got it all out of yours—about the time your lamented papa invested his last shilling in it.

LADY ELIZABETH. *(Sits on couch)* Poor old dad! Why on earth did he do it?

BROCKINGTON. Why, it was just a last gamble. He was all in, anyhow. *(Sits.)*

LADY ELIZABETH. And he thought that he had provided for me. But the mine did pay dividends for a time.

BROCKINGTON. Oh, yes—just long enough to get the gullibles in.

LADY ELIZABETH. You really think there is no hope?

BROCKINGTON. Not a particle. Didn't I travel all the way to Mexico as your trustee to look into the matter?—and a rotten trip it was, too. No, my dear, I got the best engineers in America and they all agreed the mine's worked out.

LADY ELIZABETH. *(Rises and crosses to* C.*)* Well—that being the case, there is nothing left for me to do but to continue in my present engagement.

BROCKINGTON. What engagement? You don't mean to say you're working? (LADY ELIZABETH *nods.* BROCKINGTON *rises.)* What!

LADY ELIZABETH. I must have clothes, and a roof over my head—and I must eat!

BROCKINGTON. But good heavens, haven't I offered to marry you?

LADY ELIZABETH. Well, it's awfully good of you, Freddy—but I'd rather sell my talents than myself.

BROCKINGTON. And may I ask what talents you are selling?

LADY ELIZABETH. I am a social chaperone.

BROCKINGTON. Good Heavens!

LADY ELIZABETH. Shocking, isn't it?

BROCKINGTON. You mean you are going to boost these people into society?

LADY ELIZABETH. I'm going to try. *(Cross to* R.*)*

BROCKINGTON. Ha! This is rich—dashed rich. So you're going to teach 'em not to drop their h's or use the fish-forks with the roast beef. *(*L. *of table.)*

LADY ELIZABETH. Oh, they're not *that* sort of outsiders.

BROCKINGTON. No?

LADY ELIZABETH. Not at all. The mother's a darling and the little girl is a perfect dear. I merely allow it to be known that I am visiting them, and I tell them the proper charities to subscribe to—the proper places to be seen in—advise them as to tailors, modistes, milliners and so on. Presently I shall take them to call on some good-natured friend of mine—Gladys Somersby, for example. I know she won't mind. The poor dear is as broke as I am. I daresay Gladys will even return their call if I ask her, and—well—one thing will lead to another—I shall at least get them into the fringe of society. Oh, I don't say I like it, but I don't like starving, either. *(Sits* R.*)*

BROCKINGTON. *(*L. *of table)* There's still one more way.

LADY ELIZABETH. Is there?

BROCKINGTON. Yes—marry me.

LADY ELIZABETH. Freddy!

BROCKINGTON. You don't dislike me—do you?

LADY ELIZABETH. No.

BROCKINGTON. In love with anybody else?

LADY ELIZABETH. No.

BROCKINGTON. Then why not take me up? You can't stick to this sort of thing. You know it makes you sick. Come now, doesn't it?

LADY ELIZABETH. It's not exactly pleasant.

BROCKINGTON. Well, then, say yes.

LADY ELIZABETH. No.

BROCKINGTON. No?

LADY ELIZABETH. Yes.

BROCKINGTON. Which is it, Betty?

LADY ELIZABETH. No.

BROCKINGTON. You're making a grave mistake.

LADY ELIZABETH. Perhaps.

BROCKINGTON. You'll be sure to regret it.

LADY ELIZABETH. Perhaps.

BROCKINGTON. Betty——

LADY ELIZABETH. Don't think I don't appreciate your offer—I do—but it's like this—I don't happen to love you.

BROCKINGTON. But we could jog along very comfortably.

LADY ELIZABETH. No, Freddy, it's too big a risk.

BROCKINGTON. I'll chance it if you will.

LADY ELIZABETH. *(Rises)* No, it's no good. (BROCKINGTON *crosses to* L.) It's no good!

BROCKINGTON. So—I am thrown into the discard.

LADY ELIZABETH. Don't put it like that.

BROCKINGTON. Well, that's the long and short of it. Ha! So this is the end of all my planning—all my patience—to be chucked out like this.

LADY ELIZABETH. Draw it easy, old man.
BROCKINGTON. Ha! So this is the finish!

(Enter DAVID. *Crosses slowly to* R.C.*)*

BROCKINGTON. Betty, shall I tell you what you are—you're a beggar on horseback.
LADY ELIZABETH. Freddy!
BROCKINGTON. Yes, my girl. That's what you are—a beggar on horseback, and some day——
(Sees DAVID.*)* Well, sir?
DAVID. *(To* BROCKINGTON*) Sorry* you can't stay to dinner, Lord Brockington.
BROCKINGTON. Good evening, Lady Elizabeth.
(To DAVID*)* Good evening. *(Exit* C. *to* L.*)*
DAVID. So, that's your cousin?
LADY ELIZABETH. Yes—that's cousin Freddy.
DAVID. Well, one can't help one's relatives.
LADY ELIZABETH. *(On couch* L.*)* No, and one's relatives can't help one—or won't. Oh, never mind him. Where's everybody?
DAVID. Gone to dress for dinner.
LADY ELIZABETH. Oh, yes—you don't have to, do you?
DAVID. No.

(Enter WILLIAM C. *from* R.*)*

DAVID. *(R.)* Daresay you're right—though I never thought of it before. I daresay you're right.
WILLIAM. Of course she's right—if I may say so.
DAVID. Well!
WILLIAM. Quite well—thanks, lovely evening, isn't it? I'll say so. Charming sunset. I suppose you're David. Heard you'd entered the Church—see you're wearing the uniform.

DAVID. Who are you, sir? By what right do you intrude like this?

WILLIAM. Ever read about the prodigal son?

DAVID. Really, sir—I must——

WILLIAM. Sorry—beg pardon—of course you have—being a clergyman. Well, I'm him—he, I mean—the prodigal son of the family, and I've come back. Funny thing about prodigals—they always come back. *(To* LADY ELIZABETH*)* Perhaps you've noticed it, eh?

LADY ELIZABETH. Can't say I have.

WILLIAM. Possibly you haven't known many prodigals.

LADY ELIZABETH. Yes, I have—but those I've known always stayed at home. Everybody wished they'd go, but they never did.

WILLIAM. Well, I followed the Biblical example. I *did* go—but now I'm back.

LADY ELIZABETH. Then you are one of the family?

WILLIAM. You guessed it. I'll say so. I'm the Reverend David's very unreverend brother.

DAVID. What!

LADY ELIZABETH. Really? *(To* DAVID*)* Why, David, you never told me you had another brother.

WILLIAM. Hush, hush—don't start anything. You see, I'm the sort of thing one doesn't speak of. I'm the picture that is turned toward the wall.

LADY ELIZABETH. The picture that is——

WILLIAM. Sure—exactly. I am the blot on the 'scutcheon—the family skeleton—don't you see? Hear my bones rattle? Funny I should blow in like this, isn't it? I disappeared through that identical window fifteen years ago. *(Offers his hand to* DAVID *with a genial smile.)* Shake, Dave! How are you? (DAVID *stares at him blankly.)* Oh, I'm William, all right—Willie—dear old Bill.

DAVID. I—I—don't believe it.

WILLIAM. *(With a chuckle to* LADY ELIZABETH) Doesn't know his own brother. Well, it's not strange. He wasn't very big when I dug out. Well, I'll have to try and convince him, I suppose. Dave —do you remember the day Farmer Squeers caught you stealing his apples and had you over his knee, and I heard you squealing, and——

DAVID. No, sir, I recall no such occurrence.

WILLIAM. All right, then. Have to try again. Let me see. Do you remember the time you upset grandmother's bee-hive?

DAVID. Yes—I do remember that.

WILLIAM. *(Delighted—to* LADY ELIZABETH*)* Ah, I thought he wouldn't forget that. I tell you, Miss—er—I didn't quite catch the name?

LADY ELIZABETH. I am Elizabeth Galton.

WILLIAM. Er—thanks—as I was saying, Miss Galton——

DAVID. *Lady—Lady* Elizabeth Galton, if you please.

WILLIAM. (LADY ELIZABETH *sits on couch* L.) As I was saying about those bees, Lady Elizabeth, the real way to make a man remember you is to sting him. He may forget the benefits, but he always remembers the stings. So you see, David, I really am your brother Bill who ran away and has come home again. Gee! Old man, but I'm awfully glad to see you. *(He seizes the reluctant hand of* DAVID *and wrings it heartily.* DAVID *writhes with pain.)* What appears to be the matter?

DAVID. Why—er—why have you come home again?

WILLIAM. To see the folks—to see the folks—Heaven and earth, why not?

DAVID. This will be a dreadful shock to my father and mother.

WILLIAM. Look here now, they're my father and mother, too, you know. I'll risk it, if you will.

DAVID. But it's so surprising—so unexpected.

WILLIAM. Well, I'll tell you—I meant to walk right up and pull the old bell, but when I saw the house I found I'd lost the front-door habit. Coming up the drive, I suddenly felt—well—just like a bad boy who had stayed out all night—and was going to get the dickens for it.

LADY ELIZABETH. Well, you *had* stayed out all night, hadn't you?

WILLIAM. I'll say so. I thought it would be sort of droll to come back through that same old window. It *is* rather amusing, isn't it? *(They laugh.)*

LADY ELIZABETH. Very.

DAVID. I think—it's very disturbing.

WILLIAM. You seem to be a little weak on the humorous side, don't you? Still I do think you might be a little glad to see your long-lost brother.

DAVID. Oh, of course, I *am* glad.

WILLIAM. Well, look it, look it—for God's sake, look it!

DAVID. Of course, I'm awfully relieved to know you're alive and all that sort of thing.

WILLIAM. Oh, yes, I'm alive and kicking—at least *I'm alive* and *you're* kicking.

DAVID. But it's really most disturbing.

WILLIAM. Why, what's the matter—aren't they all well?

DAVID. Oh—yes—yes.

WILLIAM. That's fine. And now perhaps you'll go and break it to father. Be gentle with him—they say that joy doesn't kill—but we mustn't take any chances.

DAVID. You should have thought of that before. Why didn't you write?

WILLIAM. Because he might have forbidden me to come and you know how I always hated to disobey him. I always did it, but I hated it.

DAVID. I—I really don't know what to do.

WILLIAM. That's why I'm telling you. Ah, go along, like a good fellow. *(He takes* DAVID *by the arm and propels him to the door at* R.*)* Come, come, he can't do anything to you. You didn't bring me here, you know——

DAVID. But really I——

WILLIAM. Oh—that's all right—that's all right. *(He pushes* DAVID *through door* R.*)*

LADY ELIZABETH. *(Sitting on couch* L.*)* I see you know how to manage the clergy.

WILLIAM. No—only small brothers. *(There is a pause.)*

LADY ELIZABETH. You can't quite place me here, can you?

WILLIAM. Well, not quite.

LADY ELIZABETH. I'm just a visitor.

WILLIAM. Friend of the family?

LADY ELIZABETH. Why, I suppose so.

WILLIAM. Not—er—engaged to anybody hereabouts?

LADY ELIZABETH. No—not yet.

WILLIAM. Er—you'll pardon my abruptness?

LADY ELIZABETH. Of course.

WILLIAM. You see, I'm an American now and Americans go straight to the point. Now, I'd like to get my bearings about the old place, and so—er——

LADY ELIZABETH. Of course. Ask me anything you please.

WILLIAM. That's bully of you. *(Takes chair from* L. *of table* R. *to* C. *and sits facing* LADY ELIZABETH.*)* Now, tell me, Lady Elizabeth—what kind of a lady are you?

LADY ELIZABETH. In me you see a poor but honest noblewoman—daughter of the Marquis of Dunsborough, lately deceased in a state of poverty only to be described as pitiable. The only bit of luck

I've had lies in the fact that I did not inherit my father's debts—my brother did that, poor fellow. Pretty rough on him.

WILLIAM. I didn't mean to be inquisitive.

LADY ELIZABETH. Oh, that's all right. All England knows it—why shouldn't you?

WILLIAM. Well, then, tell me—you know my people awfully well, I suppose.

LADY ELIZABETH. Not very.

WILLIAM. You know them better than I do—at all events. Tell me about them.

LADY ELIZABETH. Well—you'll like your sister.

WILLIAM. God bless my soul! That'll be Mary. Almost a woman, isn't she? Good Lord!

LADY ELIZABETH. She's a darling.

WILLIAM. *(Delighted)* You don't say so!

LADY ELIZABETH. I do say so.

WILLIAM. Is she dark or fair?

LADY ELIZABETH. Oh, dark—with big, soft brown eyes.

WILLIAM. You don't say so!

LADY ELIZABETH. I do say so.

WILLIAM. Big or little?

LADY ELIZABETH. Oh, quite petite—and gentle. Oh, she's a lamb.

WILLIAM. You don't say so!

LADY ELIZABETH. Why do you keep saying I don't say so when I do say so?

WILLIAM. I don't know. Silly, isn't it? Well, well, that's fine. I hoped she'd be nice. Kind of thought she would. She was a sweet baby, but then, so was I—and look at the darn thing now! *(Laughs.)*

LADY ELIZABETH. Now that I think of it, your sister looks a little like you.

WILLIAM. God help her. I suppose you live in London?

LADY ELIZABETH. Oh, yes—part of the year.

WILLIAM. Pretty good place, London—not as

fine as New York, of course—but not bad. Can't see what you're doing in a place like Knotley, when you might be in London.

LADY ELIZABETH. You'll see soon enough.

WILLIAM. *(Rises and walks back of stage)* Sleepy old place. When Gabriel blows his trumpet the sleepers of Knotley are surely going to regard it as an impertinence. Sleepy, conservative, monotonous, dusty, beautiful old place. Nothing seems to have changed much since I left the place, as a boy. *(Looks round the room.)* Might have left it only yesterday. Crept downstairs in the middle of the night—what do you suppose was the last thing I did?

LADY ELIZABETH. How could I guess?

WILLIAM. You couldn't, of course. Well, I stood here for a second, looking around the old place for the last time—there was a lump in my throat about the size of a baseball—I can feel it yet. I kind of hated to leave the old place without something of me still here. Same kind of feeling a kid has when he wants to carve his initials on things. No matter how much a boy has hated his school he always wants to leave his initials on the desk. Well, I didn't have time to do any carving just then. So I took a little kodak snapshot of myself in my pocket, I tiptoed over to the fireplace and hid it in a crevice behind the mantelpiece. I wonder if it's there still!

LADY ELIZABETH. *(Rises and crosses to* C.*)* Oh, do look and see.

(WILLIAM *goes over to fireplace. Ad. lib. until he finds photograph and blows off dust.)*

WILLIAM. Well, what do you know about that? Here it is—little faint—but I guess you can make it out. *(Shows it to her.)*

LADY ELIZABETH. Hm! What a funny face!

WILLIAM. Yes, and I suppose it's just as funny now.

LADY ELIZABETH. Oh, I beg your pardon—I only meant——

WILLIAM. No apologies needed—I never did get myself mixed up much with Apollo. But I wasn't thinking how I looked just then. Right through that window I went—moon high in the sky—not a sound in the world—heart full of hopes—head full of romance—hands full of boots——

LADY ELIZABETH. Boots on your hands?

WILLIAM. Didn't want to wake anybody.

LADY ELIZABETH. Why did you run away?

WILLIAM. I thought you knew my father. (LADY ELIZABETH *smiles and sits in chair* C.) That's the answer—incompatibility of temper. Father never talked with me. He orated at me like the late Mr. Gladstone or William Jennings Bryan. It was fierce. Platitudes, copybook maxims, avalanches of them. Wanted me to be a clergyman—I was to start by taking a class in Sunday school and doing district visiting among his mill-workers. I hated it like hell—— Oh, I beg your pardon—I mean I didn't quite like it. But he kept nagging at me. And when my dear mother began to pray for me—I was afraid I was doomed to spend the rest of my life in a black coat and a shovel hat and—well, I just couldn't stand it. So I beat it.

LADY ELIZABETH. Beat it?

WILLIAM. Skedaddled—vamoosed—you know.

LADY ELIZABETH. Eh? What?

WILLIAM. Departed—went—lit out—without farewell or explanation to papa. And I'll make you a little bet that when I see papa the first thing he will do will be to demand an explanation. He was always demanding explanations, usually from the hearth rug. He used to stand on that hearth rug—

(Indicating rug R.*)*—and demand explanations by the hour.

LADY ELIZABETH. And after you "beat it"?

WILLIAM. Well, I walked to Liverpool—sailed before the mast for Australia, thence to San Francisco—finally settled in the United States, usually referred to by the inhabitants as God's own country.

LADY ELIZABETH. Is it quite that?

WILLIAM. Well—it's a pretty good place.

LADY ELIZABETH. You must have had rather a lonely life.

WILLIAM. Not a bit of it. One hundred million others over there.

LADY ELIZABETH. How did you live? Did you teach English to the Americans?

WILLIAM. No. They think they speak it already—and some of them *do,* in spite of immigration.

LADY ELIZABETH. And you have succeeded in America, I hope?

WILLIAM. Well, I have, I fear, inherited my father's talent for oratory, and anybody with the gift of gab can get along in America. They're a good-natured race.

LADY ELIZABETH. They seem to be. *(Rise and cross to* L. *and slowly around piano.)*

WILLIAM. *(*C.*)* Shouldn't wonder if you'll think it awfully crude and American of me—but the fact is I've taken an instantaneous liking to you.

LADY ELIZABETH. Thanks, so much.

WILLIAM. It's probably happened to you before.

LADY ELIZABETH. Perhaps.

WILLIAM. I'll say so. *(Puts chair back* L. *of table* R.*)* The point is, I've got a kind of a hunch I'm going to need a friend or two before long.

LADY ELIZABETH. Really?

WILLIAM. I'd like to be on your waiting list of friends.

LADY ELIZABETH. Waiting list?

WILLIAM. Sort of on probation—to be admitted to full and regular standing *if* and *when* I make good.

LADY ELIZABETH. Oh, I see. And am I to be put on your waiting list, too?

WILLIAM. Not you. You're elected at first sight. But I don't expect you to admit me all at once to your friendship. You don't know anything about me—and then you're English.

LADY ELIZABETH. You're as English as I am.

WILLIAM. Yes, but I got over it.

LADY ELIZABETH. That doesn't sound very complimentary. *(Crosses to front of sofa.)*

WILLIAM. You know what I mean, don't you?

LADY ELIZABETH. Yes, but after all, I can't very well be less generous than you.

WILLIAM. Eh?

LADY ELIZABETH. *(In front of sofa)* If you insist on making a friend of me at first sight, I don't see how I can do less, do you?

WILLIAM. Do you mean it?

LADY ELIZABETH. Of course.

WILLIAM. *(Takes her hand)* Shake, Lady Elizabeth. This is simply corking. *(Sits on sofa beside her.)* I—I don't believe you ever did such a thing before in your life. It's immense. Ten minutes ago you never heard of me, and look at us now. *(Enter* ANTOINETTE R.*)* It's great!

LADY ELIZABETH. *(Smiling)* Isn't it?

ANTOINETTE. Oh, pardon! I fear I am intruding. (WILLIAM *rises.)* But it really is very late, milady, and you are not yet dressed for dinner.

LADY ELIZABETH. Heavens! I'd forgotten how late it was. *(Rises.)* Mademoiselle, this is Mr. William Burroughs—Miss Mary's brother. *(Goes around piano* L.*)*

(WILLIAM *and* ANTOINETTE *shake hands. She*

shows by slightly wringing her hand that his grip has been strong.)

LADY ELIZABETH. *(To* WILLIAM*)* Mademoiselle is teaching your sister French. *(To* ANTOINETTE*)* Mr. Burroughs has just come home after a long absence.

ANTOINETTE. Ah, Monsieur!

LADY ELIZABETH. And he's been so interesting that the time just flew.

WILLIAM. It sure did.

LADY ELIZABETH. *I'll* say so. *(She smiles at him and exits* L.*)*

WILLIAM. *(*L.C.*, turns and finds* ANTOINETTE *at his side.)* So you—teach things to my little sister?

ANTOINETTE. Ah, oui—French—Italian and the piano.

WILLIAM. You're from Paris, of course.

ANTOINETTE. *Bien sur!*

WILLIAM. Nice place, Paris—not so good as New York, of course. Still, it's a great town, I'll say. How do you stand this place after Paris?

ANTOINETTE. One has no choice when one has to teach things for a living.

WILLIAM. That's right, too.

ANTOINETTE. And then I like your little sister very, very much.

WILLIAM. I'm awfully glad to hear that. I expect to like her a whole lot myself.

ANTOINETTE. I should think so. Mademoiselle Marie, she is *tres gentille. (The following speech is spoken in French)* She is so like the Springtime—so full of grace and charm and so kind and generous and thoughtful of everybody, etc., etc.

WILLIAM. I'll say so.

ANTOINETTE. Monsieur, he speak French?

WILLIAM. No—sorry.

ANTOINETTE. Oh, well, your little sister and me,

we are great friends and I do my most best to teach her everything what I know.

WILLIAM. I'm sure you do. I'll bet on it. You know there are a lot of things a generous person like you can give that no amount of money can pay for, and I am just as sure as I can be that you've given a lot of them to my little sister. *(Pats her on cheek.)* And I'm awfully—awfully grateful to you.

(Enter MR. BURROUGHS, *followed by* GEORGE *and* DAVID R. *They are dressed for dinner.* MR. BURROUGHS *comes down* R. GEORGE C. *and* DAVID *works over to* L.*)*

WILLIAM. *(Holding out hand to* MR. BURROUGHS*)* My dear father——

BURROUGHS. *(Putting hands behind his back)* Mademoiselle, I will trouble you to leave the room.

ANTOINETTE. *Oui, Monsieur. (Exits* L.*)*

WILLIAM. Well, Father, how are you?

*(*MR. BURROUGHS *does not speak or move.)*

WILLIAM. *(Turns to* GEORGE*)* Well, George, perhaps you won't mind?

GEORGE. *(Hesitates, looks at* MR. BURROUGHS, *then shakes hands with* WILLIAM.*)* Ah—how do you do? *(They shake hands—*GEORGE *squirms and wrings his hand.)*

BURROUGHS. One moment.

WILLIAM. There's nothing poisonous on my hand, really. David—— *(The three just look at him.)* Well, here I am, you see. Back in England, after all these years—beautiful England—home again—the end of a perfect day. Little sultry, isn't it?

BURROUGHS. I demand an explanation.

WILLIAM. I knew it!

BURROUGHS. I have sent word to your mother that, before I shall allow her to see you, I shall, as a matter of principle, be compelled to demand a complete——

WILLIAM. Explanation. I know—all right. Let's all sit down and have a nice, friendly little chat. *(Sits on chair* L. *of table.* GEORGE *sits on* R. *of couch.* DAVID *sits on* L. *of couch.)*

BURROUGHS. *(Standing)* I am not referring to a friendly little chat, sir. For years you leave me in total ignorance of your whereabouts—of your very existence—and then you return in this preposterous fashion—stealing in through a window——

WILLIAM. No—no. Draw the line there. Never stole anything in my life. *(Rises.)* Except away. I will admit that, when I went I stole away. *(Bus. with* GEORGE *and* DAVID.*)*

BURROUGHS. *(Who has unconsciously taken up his usual oratorical post on the hearth rug)* At all events, sir, you——

WILLIAM. That's right, Father—on the rug.

*(*BURROUGHS *steps off rug.)*

WILLIAM. I went away because I thought it best for both of us.

BURROUGHS. Much thought you've ever had for me or your mother either.

WILLIAM. Honestly, Father, don't you really think you have been happier without me than you would have been with me. See how well everything has worked out. David becomes the parson. I don't know how good a parson he is, but no matter how bad, he's better than the one I should have made.

DAVID. I expect some day to be a Bishop.

WILLIAM. Gee—that's great! And I see that—

(Looking at poster on wall)—good old George is in politics.

GEORGE. Yes, sir, and some day I may be Prime Minister—no one knows.

WILLIAM. That's right. *No* one knows. And I see you are a conservative, too?

GEORGE. Naturally, sir—naturally!

WILLIAM. Oh, very naturally. Well, Father, that pleases you—while I—well—there's nothing conservative about me. Don't you see how it's all worked out for the best? I should have always been a thorn in your flesh, whereas I daresay good old George and David represent your views completely. Yes—now that I look at them, I'm quite sure they do.

BURROUGHS. I'm very proud of your brothers, sir. They are a great satisfaction to me.

WILLIAM. My dear father—they look it. *(Reading poster)* "Vote for George Burroughs, Esquire—the Conservative Candidate for Knotley"—Afraid you're on the wrong side, George.

GEORGE. Wrong side, sir?

WILLIAM. The plain people are bound to land on top. It's the handwriting on the wall. The tide of democracy is rising and the man who tries to dam it will *be* damned.

BURROUGHS. This is ridiculous, treasonable nonsense you are talking, sir! *(Furious.)*

DAVID. Sounds to me like Socialism.

GEORGE. I think the fellow's mad.

WILLIAM. Oh, no—it's the stand-patters who've gone bughouse. *(Sits.)*

DAVID. Bughouse?

GEORGE. Stand-patters?

WILLIAM. Yes, stand-patters—an American expression for a politician who, right or wrong, says, "Here I stand until the cows come home to roost."

BURROUGHS. Do you or do you not intend to give an account of yourself, sir?

WILLIAM. Account?

BURROUGHS. I said account! You disappear from my roof-tree—then follow fifteen years of silence—then out of the silence you return apparently expecting to be welcomed with rejoicing.

WILLIAM. Certainly! Prodigal son! Fatted calf, sir. David will tell you that.

BURROUGHS. For all I know, your life may have been disgraceful. I don't know. What have you been doing? I don't know. What is your status in life? I don't know. Are you a banker or a burglar? I don't know.

WILLIAM. Well, sir—there is something in what you say. *(Rises.)* Briefly, at times, I have had some success, but recently—very recently—I have had disappointments—something for which I hoped —people on whom I rather depended, have—well—I have been disappointed.

BURROUGHS. Ah—as I expected. Now that your plans have gone awry—now that your life is a failure, you crawl back here! Oh, sir—have you no sense of shame?

GEORGE. *(Rises and crosses to* WILLIAM*)* Do you intend telling us where you have *been* all these years?

WILLIAM. Well, I haven't been in jail.

BURROUGHS. Why did you never communicate with me, sir?

WILLIAM. Well, at first I'd nothing to say except that I was broke—and I didn't think that would interest you much. You see I was a sailor. (DAVID *rises.)*

GEORGE. Ah—an officer on a ship.

WILLIAM. No—George, dear—just a sailor—you know—a chap that pulls ropes—gets the scurvy—and says, "Aye, aye, sir," when the mate kicks him.

DAVID. A common sailor?

WILLIAM. Rather uncommon, I'm afraid.

BURROUGHS. Have you *ever* had any sort of decent, gentlemanly occupation?

WILLIAM. Nothing indecent about work, is there? In fact, I think it would do George a lot of good if he had to work a while with a pick-axe and shovel as I have done.

GEORGE. A working man?

WILLIAM. Yes, George, I'm a worker.

DAVID. A manual laborer? Good Heavens!

GEORGE. Deuced awkward, I call it.

WILLIAM. Mistake to despise the working man nowadays, George—he has most of the votes.

BURROUGHS. Enough of this! He may have been a laborer in his time—he is not now, of course. What he is, God knows. Apparently I am never to know. *(He sits in chair* R. GEORGE *and* DAVID *resume their seats on couch.)* But his object in coming home is clear enough.

WILLIAM. Certainly, prodigal son, fatted calf! Surely *you* remember, David. Suppose you tell him. It's quite in your line.

DAVID. I don't understand you.

WILLIAM. Really! Must I quote Scripture to a future Bishop? Very well, then—here goes: "But the father said to his servants, 'Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet, and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and be merry, for this, my son, was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found,' and they began to be merry." *(Looks at the gloomy three.)* And they began to be merry. *(Pause.)* What did you say, Father?

BURROUGHS. Sir, we want none of your blasphemies here. I say your object in coming home is all too clear.

WILLIAM. Certainly, Father. The fatted calf!

BURROUGHS. Exactly. In other words, blackmail. (GEORGE *and* DAVID *rise.)*

GEORGE. *(Crosses to* R.C.*)* Blackmail, I say, Pater.

DAVID. Blackmail?

WILLIAM. Did you say blackmail?

BURROUGHS. Out with it—how much do you want?

WILLIAM. What?

BURROUGHS. Why beat about the bush? How much will you take to go away and never come back? Come—come—let's have it.

GEORGE. I say, Pater——

DAVID. Father, really——

BURROUGHS. Be silent! The thing's clear enough. He knows that your brother George is running for Parliament as a conservative. He knows how disastrous it would be if it gets about the constituency that I have a socialistic son—oh, he's shrewd enough. He has bided his time. Very well, I'll pay—I can do that—thank God, and so I say again, How much do you want?

WILLIAM. Father!

(Enter MRS. BURROUGHS L.*)*

MRS. BURROUGHS. Willie!

WILLIAM. *(Seeing her)* Mother! *(He goes to her and takes her in his arms.)* Mother!

MRS. BURROUGHS. Oh, my dear, you have come home at last!

WILLIAM. Yes, yes, Mother, here I am.

MRS. BURROUGHS. I—I always knew you would. Oh—I'm so glad—so glad! *(She weeps.)*

WILLIAM. There—there—Mother dearest—don't cry. *(They sit on couch* L.*)*

BURROUGHS. Jane, you have disregarded my wishes.

MRS. BURROUGHS. I know, dear—I know, but—I—well, I just couldn't wait any longer.

WILLIAM. Fifteen years was long enough to wait—wasn't it, Mother?

MRS. BURROUGHS. Oh, too long—too long—let me have a good look at you. My Willie! Oh, it's good to see you!

WILLIAM. It's great, isn't it?

MRS. BURROUGHS. And you're all right—aren't you?

WILLIAM. Yes, yes.

MRS. BURROGHS. I knew you would be—but your father always said he was sure you would come to a bad end.

BURROUGHS. Never mind what I said!

MRS. BURROGHS. *(Rises and crosses to* R.C.*)* But John, dear, you know you did say it. *(Bus. with* BURROUGHS. *To* WILLIAM.*)* What church have you been attending, Willie?

WILLIAM. No particular church, Mother.

MRS. BURROUGHS. But all churches are particular, aren't they? (BURROUGHS *raps on table—bus.* MRS. BURROUGHS *to* WILLIAM*)* I'm afraid dinner is awfully late, and when that happens your father always gets so irritated. (BURROUGHS *raps louder on table.)* Why, you're not dressed for dinner, Willie!

WILLIAM. My glad rags aren't here, Mother.

MRS. BURROUGHS. Glad rags?

WILLIAM. My evening clothes, Mother.

MRS. BURROUGHS. Are they in rags? I'm so sorry!

WILLIAM. No—no. They're in my grip.

MRS. BURROUGHS. Grip?

WILLIAM. My baggage—I mean my luggage—I left it at the Blue Cow.

BURROUGHS. Blue Cow?

MRS. BURROUGHS. Your father doesn't like the Blue Cow.

BURROUGHS. A very undesirable place, sir.

MRS. BURROUGHS. You see, Mr. Mooney, who keeps the Blue Cow, is a great trial to your father. He's a Socialist—and, of course, anti-prohibition—and your father is an ardent prohibitionist.

WILLIAM. Of course.

BURROUGHS. *(Looking at watch)* Jane—aren't those girls dressed for dinner yet—eh—eh—eh?

MRS. BURROUGHS. John, dear, you won't mind—just for once—if Willie hasn't his evening clothes for dinner.

GEORGE. Beastly awkward. Lady Elizabeth will think it deucedly curious. *(To* WILLIAM*)* Lady Elizabeth Galton, you know. She is related to the Archbishop of York.

WILLIAM. You don't say so.

DAVID. She is the daughter of the Marquis of Dunsborough.

WILLIAM. Well—well—well.

MRS. BURROUGHS. And our guest at present.

WILLIAM. Yes, Mother.

MRS. BURROUGHS. If your clothes were only a little darker, dear.

GEORGE. I do think William might respect the customs of polite society. *(Goes up.)*

MR. BURROUGHS. I shall demand that he respect them while he remains beneath my roof-tree.

WILLIAM. Roof-tree!

(Enter MARY L. *She stands an instant looking at* WILLIAM *and then runs and throws herself into his arms.)*

MARY. Willie!

BURROUGHS. Mary!

MARY. *(Fearing she has made a mistake, swiftly*

releases herself from WILLIAM'S *arms.)* Isn't it Willie?

WILLIAM. Oh, yes, it's Willie, all right. My little sister—what a darling you are!

MARY. My big brother Willie! They said you were lost—and you've come back. I'm awfully—awfully glad!

WILLIAM. So am I. You've given me an awfully jolly welcome—you and mother.

MARY. Oh, I'm so glad! Father, isn't it splendid?

BURROUGHS. Quite so. Quite so. Jane! Are we ever going to dine?

MRS. BURROUGHS. David—will you take Willie to your room? *(To* WILLIAM*)* After your long journey from America, I am sure you will be glad to wash your hands.

WILLIAM. I washed them in London—still——

MARY. I'll take him, Mother. Come along, Willie—I want you to tell me all about America.

WILLIAM. I'll tell you all about America while we're washing my hands. *(They cross to* L.*)*

MARY. Willie—is America so very much bigger than England?

WILLIAM. You could put the whole of England into the Bronx. *(They exit* L.*)*

BURROUGHS. Ha! Delightful dinner we're going to have, I must say!

MRS. BURROUGHS. Now, John, really, I do hope you'll make an effort to be agreeable.

MR. BURROUGHS. Make an effort—make an effort—I trust I shall never have to make an effort to be agreeable. But to have my entire household upset in this manner—— *(Enter* SIMMONS R.*)* Well, Simmons?

SIMMONS. Mr. Mooney, sir.

BURROUGHS. What?

SIMMONS. Yes, sir.

BURROUGHS. What Mooney?

SIMMONS. Of the Blue Cow, sir.

BURROUGHS. That person! What impudence! Inform him that I am not at home.

(Enter MOONEY R. *Rushes past* SIMMONS. SIMMONS *exits.* GEORGE *crosses to* R.*)*

MOONEY. Sorry to be intruding, Mr. Burroughs, but faith, there's no time to lose.

BURROUGHS. Eh?

MOONEY. Mr. Burroughs—do you know you have a thief in your house?

BURROUGHS *and* GEORGE. *(Together)* What? A thief in the house—what nonsense!

DAVID. Impossible!

MOONEY. He was seen entering your garden. He didn't come out and he ain't there now—so he must be in the house.

BURROUGHS. What on earth are you talking about?

MOONEY. Well, sir—this is the way of it. I come home just now, and I'm told a lot of my silver has been stolen off the place. There was a stranger come to the inn this evening—hangs about a bit—and then disappears—leaving a portmanteau that's got only some clothes in it. My cashier says this man acts kind of like as if he was lost, or something, but she didn't pay much attention and presently he's gone—and then they miss the silver.

MRS. BURROUGHS. Good gracious!

BURROUGHS. What did he look like?

MOONEY. My young lady bookkeeper says he's after wearing a dark coat, with flannel trousers and white shoes and a Panama straw hat—and she thinks he looked like he might be an American.

GEORGE. An American?

DAVID. Dear, dear!

MRS. BURROUGHS. Oh!

MOONEY. *(Looks at each of them as they speak)* Well, sir—what will yer be doin' about it?

MR. BURROUGHS. Do—do—do?

MOONEY. Faith—you've got to do something. *(Whispers)* He's in the house, I tell you.

BURROUGHS. *(Shouts)* Don't whisper at me, sir! I see no occasion to do anything.

MOONEY. Won't yer be after ringing up the police?

MRS. BURROUGHS. Oh, no—no—no!

MOONEY. Hush—hush—for the love of Heaven! Of course, ma'am, the police is bad, and all that, but burglars is worse, I'm thinking.

MRS. BURROUGHS. Oh, John John!

MOONEY. Now don't be uneasy, ma'am—I've got a revolver. (MRS. BURROUGHS *shrieks.)*

BURROUGHS. Hush—hush—Jane! Hush! I will search the house, Mr. Mooney, and if this person is here I will question him.

MOONEY. Here—take the revolver, sir.

BURROUGHS. Thank you, no.

MOONEY. Sure—you'd better, sir. I've been in New York myself, and faith, these Americans will shoot as soon as look at you. I'll go with you, Mr. Burroughs.

BURROUGHS. I shall go alone, sir. I don't wish any shooting done.

MOONEY. And what'll yer do when you find him?

BURROUGHS. I will insist on an explanation.

MOONEY. Explanation is it? Ha—faith, all the explanation he'll give you will be a rap on the coco.

BURROUGHS. I say, I shall demand an explanation.

(Enter WILLIAM *and* MARY L.*)*

WILLIAM. More explanations?

MOONEY. *(Seeing him)* That's him—that's him —look at his clothes!

WILLIAM. Look at your own clothes. Are my clothes any funnier than yours? You see, my luggage has gone astray. Has yours?

MOONEY. Me knives and forks have gone astray.

WILLIAM. No clothes—no knives and forks—poor fellow, you've nothing for dinner at all. How did it happen?

MOONEY. They were stolen.

WILLIAM. Dear—dear! Too bad! Who stole them?

MOONEY. Faith, you did!

MRS. BURROUGHS. Oh, Willie!

MARY. Ridiculous, Father! Why don't you send this man away?

WILLIAM. Mother, it's all right, I'm sure. There's some mistake.

MOONEY. No mistake at all, whatever. He stole them. He's a thief!

(WILLIAM *turns suddenly and assumes a fighting attitude.)*

MOONEY. Wait—hold on! Faith—now—maybe it is mistaken I am.

WILLIAM. Think so?

MOONEY. *(Imitates* WILLIAM'S *attitude)* Sure, when I was in New York, the greatest night of me life—I got yer now—sure I seen yer—then I seen yer pictures in the papers. Sure, there's a mistake somewhere.

WILLIAM. I think so.

MOONEY. You're never the man to stale a lot of knives and forks.

WILLIAM. Why did you say I did?

MOONEY. Now, for the love of Heaven—sure, I didn't mean it. It was all a mistake.

WILLIAM. *(To* MRS. BURROUGHS*)* Who is this interesting maniac?

MRS. BURROUGHS. It's Mr. Mooney from the Blue Cow.

WILLIAM. Oh—father's friend. (BURROUGHS *snorts with rage.)*

MOONEY. Faith, you at the Blue Cow and me not there! Sir, I'd enjoy the great honor for to shake you by the hand.

WILLIAM. Certainly, if you wish. *(They shake hands.* MOONEY *winces.)* And now, perhaps, you'd better go.

BURROUGHS. I demand an explanation. *(To* WILLIAM*)* Not from you, sir. *(To* MOONEY*)* From you. You say you know my son?

MOONEY. What—you're his father? *(Rushes to* BURROUGHS *and shakes his hand furiously)* Sir, I congratulate you from the bottom of me heart. Sure 'tis the proud man you ought to be. *(Crosses to* MRS. BURROUGHS *and takes her hand.)* And you, Ma'am, for the fortunate mother that ye are this day.

MRS. BURROUGHS. I—I don't understand you.

WILLIAM. *(Anxious to get rid of him before he gives the game away)* Yes—yes—yes. And now, Mr. Mooney, we're just going in to dinner—so perhaps if you'll excuse us——

BURROUGHS. No, sir—no. Mooney, come here. *(He does so.)* What in the name of Heaven are you talking about?

MOONEY. Mr. Burroughs, do you mean to stand there and tell me that you don't know who your own son is?

WILLIAM. Father, if you'll allow me——

BURROUGHS. No, sir—*no! (To* MOONEY*)* Well—sir—who is he?

MOONEY. Sure, he's Gunboat Williams—that's who he is.

BURROUGHS. Gunboat Williams?

MOONEY. Yes, sir—Gunboat Williams—the lightweight champion of the world.

BURROUGHS. A prize-fighter?

MOONEY. Yes, sir—and the best man of his weight that ever set foot in a ring.

BURROUGHS. My son—a common prize-fighter!

WILLIAM. No, Father.

BURROUGHS. You deny it?

WILLIAM. Not common, Father. I was the champion.

BURROUGHS. How shall I keep this from Lady Elizabeth?

WILLIAM. By not boasting about it.

(Enter LADY ELIZABETH L.*)*

LADY ELIZABETH. I am so sorry.

BURROUGHS. Mooney! *(Motions to him to go out and say nothing.)*

(MOONEY *picks up cap and exits* C.*)*

LADY ELIZABETH. Is anything the matter?

BURROUGHS. No, no!

LADY ELIZABETH. Am I late?

BURROUGHS. It's all right—it's quite all right. Come, come—let's get in to dinner—dinner—dinner.

(MRS. BURROUGHS, MARY, DAVID AND GEORGE *exit* R.*)*

LADY ELIZABETH. *(To* WILLIAM*)* Aren't you coming?

WILLIAM. Sorry, I'm not dressed.

LADY ELIZABETH. Why, I think your clothes are deliciously unconventional. Won't you take me in?

WILLIAM. I'll say so. *(Offers* LADY ELIZABETH *his arm. They move toward door* R.*)* Coming, Father? (BURROUGHS *drops into chair* R.*)*

CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE: *The same.*

TIME: *The following morning.*

When curtain rises there are discovered all members of the family, except WILLIAM, *namely,* MR. *and* MRS. BURROUGHS, MARY, GEORGE *and* DAVID. *A family conference is going on. They are all silent*—MR. BURROUGHS *pacing up and down center.* MRS. BURROUGHS *on couch* R., MARY *on couch* L., GEORGE *in chair* L. *of table,* DAVID *in chair* R. *of table.*

They all look nervously at each other as MR. BURROUGHS *paces up and down.*

GEORGE. *(Rises)* May I be permitted to say a word, Pater?

MRS. BURROUGHS. Say it! Say it!

GEORGE. Would it be just as well, to, er—er——

BURROUGHS. Yes—yes?

GEORGE. No, I'm afraid that wouldn't do at all.

BURROUGHS. What wouldn't do?

GEORGE. Nothing, sir—nothing. *(Goes up to* C. MARY *giggles.)*

BURROUGHS. Mary!

MARY. Yes, Father.

BURROUGHS. Come here!

MARY. Yes, Father.

BURROUGHS. This levity is unseemly and out of place.

MARY. I was only laughing.

BURROUGHS. Laughing at what?

MARY. At George.

BURROUGHS. Do you think your brother George is funny?

MARY. Well, that's a matter of opinion.

BURROUGHS. You're too young to have an opinion!

MARY. And am I too young to laugh, father?

GEORGE. Mary! *(She goes up stage.)*

DAVID. *(Rising)* It occurs to me, father——

BURROUGHS. Yes!

DAVID. I say it occurs to me——

BURROUGHS. Say it! Say it!

DAVID. It occurs to me—that we need a little more time to think it over.

BURROUGHS. Very well—sit down and think it over.

*(*DAVID *sits in chair* L. *of table, rises and goes to chair* R. *of table, nervously.)*

MRS. BURROUGHS. I do wish you'd excuse me, John. I'm never good for anything so early in the morning.

BURROUGHS. No, Jane, no—we must come to some decision at once. *(Crosses to* L.*)*

MRS. BURROUGHS. But Willie may come down to his breakfast at any moment. *(Pulls bell cord.)*

BURROUGHS. *(Going around piano)* I will not sit at the same table with him. And I will not be driven from my own table either.

MRS. BURROUGHS. Oh, John!

BURROUGHS. *(*R. *of piano)* My son! Gunboat Williams! A nice tale for Knotley to roll under its tongue, if this thing becomes public.

(Enter SIMMONS.*)*

MRS. BURROUGHS. Simmons, will you please take Mr. William's breakfast up to his room. Toast and coffee, bacon and eggs and plenty of marmalade.

BURROUGHS. Marmalade!

SIMMONS. Mr. William rang for his breakfast half an hour ago, Ma'am.

MRS. BURROUGHS. Oh—very well. *(*SIMMONS *goes out.)*

BURROUGHS. Rang for his breakfast! Humph! He makes himself at home.

MARY. *(Behind piano)* Why not? It is his home, isn't it?

BURROUGHS. *(Angrily)* Mary, leave the room.

MARY. Why, certainly. Being here isn't my idea of a good time. *(Exits* L. GEORGE *crosses to* L., *around piano.)*

BURROUGHS. Mark my words, Jane, that girl needs discipline. I think she should be sent to visit her Aunt Lydia at once.

MRS. BURROUGHS. Very well, dear.

BURROUGHS. And you, David, you'd better make an excuse to run up to London.

DAVID. Very well, Father.

BURROUGHS. As for you, George——

GEORGE. *(*L.*)* I say, Pater, if I were to hop it, wouldn't Lady Elizabeth think it deucedly curious—what?

BURROUGHS. That is true. I'd forgotten Lady Elizabeth. Yes—yes—you must remain.

GEORGE. Very good, Pater.

BURROUGHS. If we can only keep this thing quiet! I went to see Mooney last night. I think I have stopped his tongue but of course we are in the fellow's hands. As for you, Jane—possibly you may have some influence with this son of yours. If so, pray induce him to be decent enough to hold his tongue about his infamous past.

GEORGE. Thank heaven. Lady Elizabeth did not

come in last night till after Mooney had given the bally show away.

BURROUGHS. I wouldn't have Lady Elizabeth know for the world.

GEORGE. It wouldn't be so bad if the blighter had any manners.

MRS. BURROUGHS. What's wrong with his manners?

GEORGE. Oh, I daresay they're right enough—for American manners.

MRS. BURROUGHS. If he's an American why shouldn't he have American manners?

BURROUGHS. An American!

GEORGE. An American! By Jove! You don't mean to say the blighter's become an American citizen.

BURROUGHS. Jane!

MRS. BURROUGHS. Oh please—I didn't say he had—I don't know anything about it.

BURROUGHS. Jane, you distinctly intimated—Ha! That would be the last straw! *(*MR. BURROUGHS *stretches his hand out in consternation.)*

(Enter WILLIAM R. *He comes down and takes* MR. BURROUGHS' *outstretched hand.)*

WILLIAM. Good morning, Father—Mother—David—George——

BURROUGHS. Sir, will you establish a precedent and answer me *one* question categorically?

WILLIAM. Why not? Why not?

BURROUGHS. Have you—or have you not—become an American citizen?

WILLIAM. Certainly I have.

BURROUGHS. *(Horrified)* What!

WILLIAM. Certainly. Why not?

BURROUGHS. You—you—traitor! You have sold your birthright for a mess of pottage.

WILLIAM. *(Comes to him)* American citizenship a mess of pottage! Oh, Father!! That's a little strong, isn't it?

BURROUGHS. I might have known it. Oh, this—this is too much! You—you renegade!

WILLIAM. I don't see the disgrace. I have lived in America fifteen years. Whatever I am, I owe to her.

BURROUGHS. And a nice job America has made of it. I shall never hold up my head again. Never, never. *(Goes out.)*

GEORGE. *(To* WILLIAM*)* An American, eh? *(Bus.)* You Yankee bounder. *(He begins a dignified exit, but breaks into a run when* WILLIAM *playfully stamps his feet behind him.)*

WILLIAM. Total loss!

DAVID. It—it's really frightfully embarrassing, you know.

WILLIAM. Oh, come now, Bishop, listen to me. Just for a few minutes, I want you to button your collar in front.

DAVID. Eh?

MRS. BURROUGHS. Why, Willie, he can't do that. He's a clergyman.

WILLIAM. Yes. I want to talk to him now not as a clergyman—but as man to man—yes, brother to brother—for after all, he is my brother. *(Crosses to* L.C.*)*

DAVID. I don't deny it.

WILLIAM. Very good of you—now really, David, what do you honestly think of the way the governor's acted about me?

DAVID. *(Rises and crosses to* WILLIAM*)* Why—er—as a matter of fact. I think he's been a little hard on you.

WILLIAM. Thank you, Bishop, for those kind words.

DAVID. Still, if you had only told him at first——

WILLIAM. Would you, if he'd flown down your throat like that?

DAVID. Daresay I shouldn't.

WILLIAM. Well, there you are. *(Sits.)*

DAVID. Pater's a bit of a handful and no mistake. Daresay, you did the right thing, getting out as you did. Wish I'd had the pluck.

WILLIAM. My dear David, you overwhelm me.

DAVID. Oh, I hop around and do as I'm told—always shall, I daresay, but you needn't think it doesn't make me sick. You needn't think there aren't times when I hate myself for it. You're a lucky dog—but you deserve it—because you had the pluck to get out. Ah, there are times when I yearn to tell him to—to go to the devil.

MRS. BURROUGHS. Oh!

WILLIAM. Dear! Dear! How unchurchly!

DAVID. Lots of things I want to do—simply don't dare—haven't the pluck, dash it!

WILLIAM. What, for example!

DAVID. Well, I'd like to tell him how I feel about you—for one thing.

WILLIAM. That's mighty nice of you. Why don't you?

DAVID. Well, really, you know after you've been a sheep all your life you can't all at once stop bleating and go to roaring. The whole business is deuced awkward. *(Going.)* I think I'll go somewhere and think it over. I may hit on something. *(Exit* C. *to* L.*)*

MRS. BURROUGHS. Willie, what *are* you going to do? *(Rises and goes to couch.)*

WILLIAM. Do?

MRS. BURROUGHS. *(Sits)* Yes, dear, your father —he's in a terrible state. Last night after dinner, when you were in the garden with Lady Elizabeth, there was an awful scene. He says he won't sit at the same table with you.

WILLIAM. I guess I can stand it.

MRS. BURROUGHS. Oh, Willie, darling, if you'd only stayed at home.

WILLIAM. Mother, if I had stayed at home, life would have been one long riot or else he'd have made me like George and David.

MRS. BURROUGHS. My dear, you mustn't be hard on your brothers.

WILLIAM. I don't mean to be, Mother. But they've been absolutely dominated by father. Why, they haven't a thought or an ambition or a plan that he hasn't put in their heads. Honestly Mother dear, would you like me to be like them?

MRS. BURROUGHS. *(Hedging)* No, dear, I want you to be yourself.

WILLIAM. That's what I mean. They're not themselves. They're himself.

MRS. BURROUGHS. I tremble to think what he'll do if he ever finds out about my writing to you and hearing from you all those years.

WILLIAM. Come, come, Mother darling, don't worry about that. I haven't missed anything else in England but I've missed my mother—all these years—yes—I've missed her terribly! Don't you know how I'd love to take you to America and care for you all the rest of your life. Why, I'd just adore it.

MRS. BURROUGHS. But things can't go on like this—what *are* you going to do?

WILLIAM. Well, I don't know yet. But before I leave here, there are some things that I must do here—or try to—oh, I can see that my time here must be short but when I go I want to leave this house just a little better and happier because of me, if I can.

MRS. BURROUGHS. What *do* you mean?

WILLIAM. Now, don't you worry, Mother. But I'm going to have a try at it and if I fail, why you'll

be none the worse and I can always go back to my own free country. God bless it!

MRS. BURROUGHS. Ah, my boy, I shall miss you.

WILLIAM. Yes, Mother, we'll miss each other. But let's not talk about that. Tell me, mother, about Lady Elizabeth—How on earth does it happen that such a peach of a girl is still single!

MRS. BURROUGHS. I don't know—of course she's very poor.

WILLIAM. Come, come now, Mother, give me a good reason.

MRS. BURROUGHS. Well, I think she's too proud just to sell her title for money——

WILLIAM. Mother, you said a mouth full!

MRS. BURROUGHS. Willie, dear, what peculiar language you do use!

WILLIAM. She is the finest thing I've seen in England.

MRS. BURROUGHS. Why, Willie darling, you don't mean——

WILLIAM. Well, you see, Mother, it wasn't very gay at dinner last night. I mean—no one seemed to have anything to say—or if they had they were afraid to say it. So after dinner you remember Lady Elizabeth and I strolled out into the garden—the moon was wonderful—I've always been a great admirer of the moon—and so has Lady Elizabeth. We found a number of things in common. *(A dreamy, smiling pause.)* Nice girl—nice girl——

MRS. BURROUGHS. Did you *say* anything to Lady Elizabeth?

WILLIAM. Oh, yes!

MRS. BURROUGHS. I mean did you—did you——

WILLIAM. Oh, no—Mother! I didn't have the nerve.

(Enter MOONEY C. *from* L.*)*

MOONEY. *(In great excitement)* Morning to ye, Ma'am. Morning to ye, Mister Burroughs.

WILLIAM. *(Rising)* Well, Mooney, what is it?

MOONEY. Sure—I'm afther comin' in here fer to do the toughest thing that ever an Irishman *had* to do.

WILLIAM. What's that?

MOONEY. Apologize.

WILLIAM. You mean about the silver?

MOONEY. No—we found the silver.

WILLIAM. Then what *do* you mean?

MOONEY. Then ye ain't seen the paper? *(Waves it.)* All about your being the Champion. *(*MRS. BURROUGHS *gets up.)*

WILLIAM. No.

MOONEY. Sure, 'tis all my fault though I'm tellin' ye I didn't go fer to do it.

WILLIAM. Let me see it. *(Takes paper and reads it.)*

MOONEY. *(Much worried)* Now for the love av Heaven, Mister Burroughs——

WILLIAM. *(With a start)* Good Heavens! Well! You've done it now, Mooney!

MOONEY. Sure, I know—I know—Sure I only told me wife, and I swore her on the Holy Book fer to hould her tongue, an' sure—she must av blabbed.

WILLIAM. *(C.)* Oh, yes—she spilled it all right.

MOONEY. *(R.C.)* Sure, Mister Burroughs, I'm that sorry I could bite me tongue out.

WILLIAM. Never mind. Perhaps it's just as well.

MRS. BURROUGHS. *(L.C.)* What will your father say when he hears of this.

WILLIAM. "I demand an explanation!"

(Enter BURROUGHS *and* GEORGE R. *both reading*

newspapers. BURROUGHS *comes down* R. MRS. BURROUGHS *sits on couch.)*

BURROUGHS. Mooney, we will excuse you. You've done your worst. Good morning.

MOONEY. *(Crosses to* R.*)* Will you have an explanation, sir.

BURROUGHS. No, sir—I want no explanation. Good morning.

MOONEY. *(To* WILLIAM*)* I'm sorry, sir.

WILLIAM. It's all right, Mooney—it would have come out some time. You run along—I'll see you at the Inn. *(*WILLIAM *goes up* C.*)*

MOONEY. Thank you, sir. *(Goes out after vainly trying to shake* MR. BURROUGHS' *hand. As he exits he says in the distance:)* It's all the fault of my old woman, etc., etc. I'll never tell her anything again.

BURROUGHS. Ruined! *(To* WILLIAM.*)* Well, sir, you've done your worst. Here it is—the whole filthy scandal. All over the public print of your native city—and your photograph in ring costume. You have ruined us all. *(Enter* DAVID C. *with newspaper.)* I hope you are satisfied.

WILLIAM. Look here now, it isn't as bad as all that.

GEORGE. Sweet mess you've got us into, I must say.

BURROUGHS. A blackguardly bruiser. *(To* MRS. BURROUGHS.*)* Your son—Madam. Your son!

WILLIAM. Oh, come, come—Father. Be fair—I'm *your* son too.

BURROUGHS. You have ruined us all. We shall never be able to hold up our heads in this community again. *(Sits* R. *of table.)*

GEORGE. It's—it's quite too humiliating. *(Sits* L. *of table.)*

WILLIAM. Nothing humiliating about being cham-

pion. A champion is the best man in the world in his class.

DAVID. *(Above table* R.*)* I shudder to think what the Rector will say.

GEORGE. And what's to become of my candidacy for Parliament? Nice chance for a conservative candidate—with a bally prize fighter for a brother—what?

BURROUGHS. Well, sir—you have accomplished your ambition. You have disgraced your entire family. And now. sir—now——

WILLIAM. *(*C.*)* And now, I suppose, I am no longer a son of yours. I am to go and never darken your door again. Very well, but before I get out, I'm going to make one or two remarks. It's true that I have been the light-weight champion of the world. It's true that I made over $200,000 in the prize ring—with my two fists. I wasn't going to tell you at first because I thought you'd be——

BURROUGHS. Now he's calling his father insane.

WILLIAM. I wasn't going to say a word about it, but since it's come out, I'm here to say that I'm not ashamed of it.

MRS. BURROUGHS. Oh, Willie! Willie!

WILLIAM. No, Mother, I'm not ashamed of it.

BURROUGHS. Where, where in Heaven's name did you ever learn this disreputable trade of yours?

WILLIAM. At the Y.M.C.A.

DAVID. Y——

WILLIAM. Y.M.C.A. Yes, sir. When I landed in San Francisco, I nearly starved to death until the Y.M.C.A. took me in. One day, while I was there, I was watching a couple of lads boxing in the gym. They got me to put on the gloves with them. I wasn't so rotten and pretty soon one of them got me a chance to go on in a preliminary bout at an Athletic Club. My opponent was a "coon" by the name of "Snowball Jackson." (BURROUGHS *throws*

up his hands in horror, as also do GEORGE *and* DAVID.*)* I was to get five dollars, win or lose. I won in the third round with a knockout. One thing led to another and pretty soon I got a manager. I had my ups and downs—I took a good many hard knocks, but in five years I was at the top of the heap. I made my pile and I retired from the ring—the undefeated light-weight champion of the world.

BURROUGHS. An eminence of iniquity.

WILLIAM. Now, Father, hear me out. After that I made up my mind——

BURROUGHS. That's enough.

WILLIAM. All right—but I will say this—I'm proud of my career in the ring—yes, sir—proud of it. I don't talk about it much, but I'm proud of it just the same. It takes skill and persistence, and courage, to get to the top in that game, and when you get there it takes clean and decent living to stay there. I took them all as they came—they couldn't come too tough for me. And when I quit—I quit unbeaten. That was eight years ago. I haven't had a glove on since. Now I'm never going to say a word about it again, but if you think I'm not proud of it, you're mistaken—because I am. I always tried my best to win. That's clean sport and clean sport is a good thing for any country.

BURROUGHS. *(Bus.)* My son—Gunboat Williams—my God!

WILLIAM. Well Father—you might at least thank me for not using my own name.

BURROUGHS. What's the difference—all the world will know it now.

GEORGE. I suppose Lady Elizabeth will leave the house at once.

WILLIAM. I'll make you a small bet she doesn't.

BURROUGHS. *(Rising and crossing to* WILLIAM*)* The manners of the prize ring—making a *wager* on a lady. You—you——

(Enter SIMMONS R. DAVID *puts newspaper on console table up stage and comes down to table.)*

SIMMONS. Beg pardon, sir.

BURROUGHS. What is it?

SIMMONS. Your telephone in the library.

BURROUGHS. Well!

SIMMONS. It's the newspaper editor. He wants an interview about Gunboat Williams.

BURROUGHS. Gunboat Williams? Tell him I'm not at home—no, I'll tell him. *(Exit* R., *followed by* SIMMONS.*)*

GEORGE. *(Rises, puts monocle in his eye, looks at* WILLIAM*)* Warship Williams! My God! *(Exit* C. *to* R.*)*

WILLIAM. And what has the Church to say?

DAVID. Really, it's frightfully embarrassing.

WILLIAM. I'm awfully sorry, Dave.

DAVID. What's the good of that now. I suppose I'd better go and break it to the Rector. Heaven knows what he's going to think. Gunboat Williams! *(Exit* C. *to* L.*)*

WILLIAM. Well, Mother—here's your notorious son. Do you love him still?

MRS. BURROUGHS. My dear, as if I should ever stop loving you! Why didn't you ever write me about all this?

WILLIAM. Well, I was afraid you'd worry about my getting hurt.

MRS. BURROUGHS. Oh, I should—I should! I should never have had a peaceful minute.

WILLIAM. Mother—do you honestly believe this thing is going to queer the whole family, as father seems to think?

MRS. BURROUGHS. I'm afraid it's rather dreadful, darling—it's such a respectable community.

WILLIAM. I wish I'd knocked Mooney's block off.

PHONE RINGS

MRS. BURROUGHS. Willie! You answer it.

WILLIAM. *(Goes to phone)* Hello, hello! I mean—are you there?

MRS. BURROUGHS. Willie! You've got it upside down. *(Bus. with phone.)*

WILLIAM. Hello! Hello! Yes, just a moment. Oh, it's for you, Mother.

MRS. BURROUGHS. Ask who it is.

WILLIAM. Who is it, please. *(To* MRS. BURROUGHS.*)* It's Mrs. Archer.

MRS. BURROUGHS. The Rector's wife! She's read the paper. Oh, dear, I can't talk to her now. I haven't the heart. Say I've gone to bed with a sick headache.

WILLIAM. Why, Mother!

MRS. BURROUGHS. Oh, I know it isn't true now, but it will be in a minute. *(She exits* L.*)*

WILLIAM. *(Into phone)* I'm very sorry, but mother says she's—er—I mean mother has just gone to bed to have a sick headache! What! Oh, yes—this is Mr. William Burroughs speaking. Yes—yes—Gunboat Williams. What's that! Hello! Hello! Hello! *(Hangs up the 'phone. After telephoning,* WILLIAM *thinks a moment, then pulls bell rope. Enter* LADY ELIZABETH L.*)* I'm so glad, Lady Elizabeth. I was just going to send Simmons to ask if you could spare me a few moments.

LADY ELIZABETH. *(Taking up workbasket off piano)* Why, of course.

(Enter SIMMONS.*)*

SIMMONS. You want something, sir?

WILLIAM. Er—I did, but I've got it. *(Exit* SIMMONS.*)* You've heard the news?

LADY ELIZABETH. News?

WILLIAM. About the exposure of the prodigal son?

LADY ELIZABETH. What do you mean?

WILLIAM. They haven't told you?

LADY ELIZABETH. Told me what?

WILLIAM. No, they wouldn't, I suppose, if they could help it. Well, everything's in a mess and so—well, I've just got to get out—fact is I'm going in a few minutes.

LADY ELIZABETH. Going?

WILLIAM. Yes.

LADY ELIZABETH. Where?

WILLIAM. Home—to America. So you see it's my last chance with you.

LADY ELIZABETH. But I don't want to lose my friend so soon. Why must you go?

WILLIAM. That's what I've got to tell you. *(He indicates chair and she sits down, by the table* L. *of table. He sits across the table* R.*)*

LADY ELIZABETH. All this sounds very ominous.

WILLIAM. Worse than that—it's my swan-song, I guess. *(They look at each other—then their eyes drop—there is a moment of awkwardness. Then, as one who speaks to make conversation in an embarrassing moment, she speaks.)*

LADY ELIZABETH. Are you going back to your ranch?

WILLIAM. Ranch?

LADY ELIZABETH. Your brother says you've been ranching in the states.

WILLIAM. Yes, I've been doing quite a lot of ranching in the neighborhood of Broadway and 42nd Street. Many fine ranches there.

LADY ELIZABETH. Cattle ranches?

WILLIAM. No—chicken ranches.

LADY ELIZABETH. Really?

WILLIAM. Hang the ranch! I've never done any ranching. That's merely my family's idea of the gentlemanly thing an English lad ought to do when he leaves home.

LADY ELIZABETH. What have you done then?

WILLIAM. Pretty much everything else—all the way from cabin boy to tramp.

LADY ELIZABETH. Not really!

WILLIAM. I've chopped so much wood for a meal that my hands were bleeding—I've stood for hours in the bread line for a roll and a cup of coffee and when the saints in charge had said a prayer and sung a hymn the coffee was as cold as I was. Oh, I've had lots of fun.

LADY ELIZABETH. Fun?

WILLIAM. Oh, well, it's all adventure and one is young, and no one knows you in a strange land, and when the bad time is over there's a relish about success that you can't get in any other way. I don't know why I go on like this to you, but they say when a man is drowning he sort of gets a quick close up of his whole past life——

LADY ELIZABETH. Are you drowning?

WILLIAM. I don't know yet. It depends on you.

LADY ELIZABETH. On me?

WILLIAM. Yes. You see there's something I wanted to ask you, but first there's something I've got to tell you—and it may be a shock to you.

LADY ELIZABETH. Before you tell me anything there's something I've got to tell you which may be a great shock to you. When I came down here to visit your people I took *my* place in the bread-line. Could anything be more sordid than that. Why don't you tell me how you despise me?

WILLIAM. Because I don't.

LADY ELIZABETH. Oh, if I were only a man.

WILLIAM. My God! What a horrible wish!

LADY ELIZABETH. It's my wish, anyhow.

WILLIAM. Don't say that—please, don't say anything like that. It's blasphemy. Oh, there may be women who might just as well be men, but not you—not you!

LADY ELIZABETH. Well, here I am—stranded—and just because I'm a woman with a title, I can't do anything about it—at least I can't do anything that I don't loathe.

WILLIAM. Surely it can't be as bad as all that.

LADY ELIZABETH. Just as bad.

WILLIAM. I say, do you mind if I ask you a question or two?

LADY ELIZABETH. Not at all.

WILLIAM. You don't mean to say you haven't anything at all?

LADY ELIZABETH. Oh, no! I've got a silver mine without any silver in it.

WILLIAM. Yes—I've got one of those mines myself. Where is it?

LADY ELIZABETH. In Mexico.

WILLIAM. In *Mexico?* Didn't it ever pay any dividends?

LADY ELIZABETH. Oh, yes—till after father died, but about that time, so my Trustee tells me, they found the mine was worked out. Oh, there were a few odds and ends but they all went to the bad.

WILLIAM. At about the same time?

LADY ELIZABETH. Yes, just about.

WILLIAM. Who is this trustee you speak of? Perhaps he—but I guess you'll think I'm getting awfully fresh.

LADY ELIZABETH. Not at all—you're my friend, aren't you?

WILLIAM. I'll tell the world I am.

LADY ELIZABETH. The trustee is Lord Brockington.

WILLIAM. Do you think that possibly he——

LADY ELIZABETH. Of course not—Lord Brockington's my cousin.

WILLIAM. Oh, I see. Well, you know it's been my experience that when you get your relations mixed up in business affairs—Oh, boy! Still, I sup-

pose it may be different in this country—What kind of a fellow is he?

LADY ELIZABETH. Oh, Freddy's all right. Awfully fond of me, too.

WILLIAM. You don't say so!

LADY ELIZABETH. He'd even marry me to-day without a penny to my name.

WILLIAM. You seem to think he deserves a lot of credit for that.

LADY ELIZABETH. Don't you?

WILLIAM. Ha! Ha! Look here—what do they call this mine that always paid dividends until this chap that wants to marry you became your trustee?

LADY ELIZABETH. The Silver Girl.

WILLIAM. The Silver Girl! The Silver Girl! Seductive name, isn't it?

LADY ELIZABETH. Yes, but I'm afraid she is an adventuress.

WILLIAM. I think you need a lawyer.

LADY ELIZABETH. I can't afford luxuries.

WILLIAM. My brother George is scarcely a luxury.

LADY ELIZABETH. I'm afraid he would be as a lawyer. Why do you think I need one?

WILLIAM. Well, I was thinking perhaps there may be some way of saving something from the ruins that your Trustee hasn't discovered. Do you mind if I speak to George about this Silver Girl?

LADY ELIZABETH. Not at all—but you mustn't trouble about me. It isn't a bit of use. Hm! Poor old dad! I'm glad he didn't live to see the mess he got me into. He was a darling—terribly irresponsible—but a darling. It seems so strange to think that I shall never see his funny, merry face again. You'd think I'd get used to it, but I don't seem to. Somehow I just—— *(Begins to break down.)*

WILLIAM. *(Rises—crosses to* L. *of* LADY ELIZA-

BETH) Don't cry—please—please don't cry! I never could stand a woman crying.

LADY ELIZABETH. It's silly of me, isn't it? There now—I shan't do it again. *(She fumbles to try and find her handkerchief but can't. He takes his out and hands it to her. She wipes her eyes.)* Thanks.

WILLIAM. *(Crosses to* L.*)* Welcome.

LADY ELIZABETH. But here I am telling you *my* troubles and you were going to tell me *yours.*

WILLIAM. Yes—and they're not easy to tell. *(Sitting on couch* L.*)* Lady Elizabeth, I don't suppose you've ever been personally acquainted with a prize fighter?

LADY ELIZABETH. A prize fighter! What a notion.

WILLIAM. Absurd idea, isn't it?

LADY ELIZABETH. Ridiculous!

WILLIAM. Yes. Quite so. However, you're acquainted with one now.

LADY ELIZABETH. What!

WILLIAM. Yes, I mean me.

LADY ELIZABETH. Mr. Burroughs!

WILLIAM. That's my guilty secret.

LADY ELIZABETH. I don't understand you at all.

WILLIAM. *(Pointing to table* R.*)* There it is—in the Knotley Guardian—all about me.

LADY ELIZABETH. *(Picks up paper—looks at it)* Mr. Burroughs!

WILLIAM. Needn't bother to read it all now. Save it for a rainy day. The long and short of it is that for several years I was one of the best known pugilists in the prize ring.

LADY ELIZABETH. Dear me!

WILLIAM. I was known as Gunboat Williams.

LADY. ELIZABETH. Heavens—what a name!

WILLIAM. I wasn't going to tell anybody over here, but that infernal Irishman gave it away—and now it's all come out. Well—that's it!

LADY ELIZABETH. How in the world did you ever do such a thing?

WILLIAM. You agree with father. You think it's a disgrace. Yes—I suppose you would. You couldn't ever look on that kind of a fellow as your friend.

LADY ELIZABETH. Well, I don't know very much about such things—Mr. Burroughs—but I've always supposed it was rather a brutal business.

WILLIAM. Yes—yes—I suppose you have.

LADY ELIZABETH. Two human beings trying to beat each other into unconsciousness—isn't that it?

WILLIAM. That's one way of looking at it.

LADY ELIZABETH. And for money—and then—the associations—aren't they rather—rather dreadful?

WILLIAM. Well, I suppose they're not exactly what you'd call lady fingers and five o'clock tea. Oh, I don't blame you for being shocked—I was afraid of it.

LADY ELIZABETH. *(Rises and crosses to him—with paper in hand)* Well, I hope you won't think I'm prudish about it. But, well—really—it is rather a pity, isn't it—and you don't seem like that kind of person at all. Why—why—I can hardly believe it. *(Moves a little up* L.*)* Oh, I'm so sorry you told me—very, very sorry!

WILLIAM. I had to. Lady Elizabeth—I've knocked about the world a good bit. I've had a lot of happy days and some sad ones. A lot of people have come into my life and gone out again, and some of them I miss a good deal, but I've never missed any of them as I'm going to miss you—because you see, I've never met anyone like you in the world—never—and never shall again. You're the one woman in the world to me—and always will be—always! That's why I had to tell you—because—well—I couldn't have asked you what I was going

to ask you without telling you—could I? You—know what I was going to ask you?

LADY ELIZABETH. Hadn't we better speak of something else.

WILLIAM. *(Reels under the blow, but bucks up.)* No, thank you—nothing else. (LADY ELIZABETH *exits* L. *through window. After* LADY ELIZABETH'S *exit,* WILLIAM *remains for a moment, sunk in gloom, staring at the floor. Enter* ANTOINETTE *from the side of the garden opposite to that on which* LADY ELIZABETH *went out, with newspaper. Thinking* LADY ELIZABETH *is still in the room,* WILLIAM *pulls himself together. Seeing* ANTOINETTE.) Where did you come from?

ANTOINETTE. *(Approaching him and indicating the paper in her hand)* Ah! Monsieur le Champion!

WILLIAM. *You've* heard the scandal?

ANTOINETTE. Please to accept my congratulations, Monsieur le Champion.

WILLIAM. Congratulations—on being kicked out of the house? That's what it amounts to. *(He rings the bell.)*

ANTOINETTE. Is it that they are not proud of you—your family?

WILLIAM. My father is—he's giving me a loving knife.

(Enter SIMMONS.)

SIMMONS. You want something, sir?

WILLIAM. Yes, Simmons, I want a drink.

SIMMONS. Certainly, sir—some mineral water, perhaps?

WILLIAM. Perhaps not. Get me a high-ball.

SIMMONS. High-ball, sir?

WILLIAM. Yes—Highball—whiskey and soda.

ANTOINETTE. Whiskey! In this house! Oo, la, la!

SIMMONS. I'm very sorry, sir, but Mr. Burroughs never allows any liquor in the house, sir. He's very strict about people enjoying themselves.

WILLIAM. Oh, of course. I forgot.

SIMMONS. But I could set you a lemon squash.

WILLIAM. No thanks—don't care for vegetables.

ANTOINETTE. Vegetables! Ce n'est pas vegetable.

SIMMONS. It's not a vegetable—it's a drink, sir.

WILLIAM. Whatever it is, I don't want it!

SIMMONS. Excuse me, sir, but I've a small bottle of my own—kept quite private, in my room, sir. It is at your service.

WILLIAM. Hooch?

SIMMONS. 'Ooch, sir?

WILLIAM. Yes—Hooch—Whiskey!

SIMMONS. Oh yes, sir. It's whiskey.

WILLIAM. *(Rising)* Oo! La! La! You didn't make it yourself?

SIMMONS. Oh no, sir.

WILLIAM. All right—try anything once—I'll take some.

SIMMONS. I thank you, sir.

WILLIAM. I thank you, Simmons.

(Exit SIMMONS R.*)*

ANTOINETTE. Monsieur wish something for to drink?

WILLIAM. That's it.

ANTOINETTE. Something to make intoxicante, eh?

WILLIAM. That's the idea—want to get pickled.

ANTOINETTE. Pickled! Oo! La! La! Ah, Monsieur le Champion, you are very strong, no!

WILLIAM. Eh?

ANTOINETTE. And brave—no?

WILLIAM. What?

ANTOINETTE. And clever—no? Ah, Monsieur le Champion, you know that nice Monsieur Corbett?

WILLIAM. Jim Corbett? Oh yes, I know him.

ANTOINETTE. You fight him—no?

WILLIAM. Yes, I fight him no. He's a heavyweight.

ANTOINETTE. I see that nice Monsieur Corbett—one time he come to Paris—oh, he have veree good time in Paris.

WILLIAM. Yes, I should think he might if there are many there like you.

ANTOINETTE. Merci M'sieur. You have been to Paris?

WILLIAM. Oh yes.

ANTOINETTE. You have happy time in Paris?

WILLIAM. Not very—there was a war going on.

ANTOINETTE. Ah, you were a soldat!

WILLIAM. You said it—I was a soldat.

ANTOINETTE. And you fight for France!

WILLIAM. I fought for something. I guess it was France. What's that song the poilus used to sing so much—some girl's name——?

ANTOINETTE. Madelon?

WILLIAM. That's it—how'd it go? *(She starts to sing "Madelon." After having sung it she says.)*

ANTOINETTE. Now you sing it.

WILLIAM. I can't sing.

ANTOINETTE. Yes—yes!

WILLIAM. You start it for me.

(She starts it and he joins in, clumsily at first—has much difficulty with the French, but finishes strong. Near end of song enter MARY.*)*

MARY. *(When song is ended)* Oh, Bill, how beautifully you sing.

WILLIAM. Quit your kidding.

ANTOINETTE. Ah, Monsieur he sing veree well.

WILLIAM. Toujours la politesse.

ANTOINETTE. Du tout—Du tout, m'sieur.

WILLIAM. De tout—de tout to you.

ANTOINETTE. *(They speak together)* Si vous venez a Paris, Monsieur, en vous donnerai une decoration—des grand banquets—au revoir. Monsieur, in my country they would build for you a monument—Oo—la—la! *(Exit* R.*)*

WILLIAM. What did *you* say?

MARY. Oh, Bill—she knows about your being a prize fighter. Isn't it exciting? Isn't it fun?

WILLIAM. Is it?

MARY. I think so.

WILLIAM. Nice of you to take it that way.

MARY. Oh, Bill—can't you understand? You're my very best brother. Oh, I don't say anything against the others, but you're my idea of what a real brother ought to be. I don't care what father says—I don't care what anybody says—I don't care what anybody thinks!

WILLIAM. You wouldn't care if I robbed a bank.

MARY. No.

WILLIAM. Or set fire to a church?

MARY. No—I just love you and always shall.

WILLIAM. Bless you. That's the kind of sister to have. *(Goes up, looks off* R.*)*

MARY. Bill, are you going to fight anybody over here?

WILLIAM. Bless your heart—no. My fighting days are over—I mean, as a professional, of course. I might make an amateur appearance if anybody made me sore enough.

MARY. *(Goes to couch* L.*)* Bill, do you know what father called you this morning before you came in?

WILLIAM. Anything worse than what he called me after I came in?

MARY. He called you an unprincipled adventurer.

WILLIAM. Rather mild for father—but he's right.

MARY. Bill——

WILLIAM. I am an unprincipled adventurer—I am a corporation lawyer.

MARY. Now I suppose you're joking again. You know, Bill, sometimes I don't always see the point of your jokes.

WILLIAM. Never mind, dear. There are quite a lot of people in England just like that.

MARY. Oh, but Bill——

(Enter SIMMONS R.*)*

SIMMONS. There's a newspaper reporter to see you, sir.

WILLIAM. Me?

SIMMONS. Yes, sir.

WILLIAM. You're sure?

SIMMONS. Oh yes, sir. He asked for Mr. Gunboat Williams.

WILLIAM. Oh, well—I'm in for it—might as well go the whole hog. Send him in.

(Exit SIMMONS R.*)*

MARY. Bill—father will be furious.

WILLIAM. Father can't be any more furious than he is without bursting—perhaps that would be the best thing that could happen. *(Enter* REPORTER R. *Stands hesitating at door.)* Oh, come in.

REPORTER. *(C.)* Mr. William Burroughs?

WILLIAM. Yes.

REPORTER. I represent the Knotley Guardian.

Perhaps you've seen our article about you in to-day's paper.

WILLIAM. I wish I hadn't.

REPORTER. Really? Anything wrong with it?

WILLIAM. Oh no—it's splendid—splendid. This is my sister, Mr.—er—Mr.—er?

REPORTER. Coykendall.

WILLIAM. I beg your pardon.

REPORTER. Coykendall.

WILLIAM. Mr.—endall—this is my sister. *(*MARY *sits on sofa.)* Please sit down. *(*REPORTER *does so* L. *of table* R. *Puts hat on table.)* What can I do for you?

REPORTER. Well, sir—as you may have observed in our little sketch of your career, there is something of a hiatus—I mean to say—after your retirement from the ring——

WILLIAM. Oh, yes.

REPORTER. My editor would like to know—I mean to say, if you have no objection——

WILLIAM. What happened next?

REPORTER. Er—precisely—I mean to say.

WILLIAM. I studied law—was admitted to the bar—I mean to say, and worked up a practice—not much—just a bare living—I mean to say.

REPORTER. Er—might I ask what you mean by that expression?

WILLIAM. You ought to know—you used it yourself—I mean to say.

REPORTER. A bare living—I mean to say. What do you mean by that?

WILLIAM. Oh, seventy-five or a hundred thousand dollars a year.

REPORTER. Just fancy! What would that be in pounds, shillings and pence?

WILLIAM. In the old days—in round numbers—somewhere between fifteen and twenty thousand pounds. It's more than that now.

REPORTER. Fancy that!

WILLIAM. I'm also a statesman.

REPORTER. Really?

WILLIAM. Nobody knows it but me. They'll find it out after I'm dead. Just now they call me a politician—I'm a member of Congress from Connecticut.

REPORTER. Conneckticut. Isn't that one of your states?

WILLIAM. Oh yes—Conneckticut *is*—one of our very finest states, in fact, Conneckticut did not ratify the Prohibition Amendment.

MARY. Bill—what is a member of Congress?

WILLIAM. A member of Congress is a man who goes to Washington to misrepresent the people.

MARY. Oh—just like our members of Parliament.

(Enter BURROUGHS *and* GEORGE, R.*)*

WILLIAM. Oh, Father—this is Mr. —endall. He's a reporter from the Knotley Guardian—and my brother, Mr. —endall. I'm being interviewed.

BURROUGHS. What?

REPORTER. How are you, sir?

BURROUGHS. I'm not well at all.

REPORTER. Awfully sorry, I'm sure.

BURROUGHS. And none the better for your presence, either.

WILLIAM. Father!

BURROUGHS. And I'll be obliged to you if you'll go and tell your editor that with my compliments.

REPORTER. Sorry, sir. No wish to intrude.

BURROUGHS. I told your editor that when I want to see a reporter I will inform him of the fact, sir.

REPORTER. Have you a photograph of yourself, sir?

BURROUGHS. What for?

REPORTER. For the Knotley Guardian, sir.

BURROUGHS. Newspapers—prize fighters—my God—what next, I wonder? Get out of my house—out—out—out! *(*REPORTER *picks hat off table and rushes out* C. *to* R. *Enter* SIMMONS *door* R. *with flask of whiskey. When he sees* BURROUGHS *he exits quickly door* R. *To* WILLIAM.*)* And as for you, sir.

WILLIAM. *(Rising)* De tout—de tout, Father. I know when I'm licked. I heard the count the first time. I'm going to pack up now. *(Moves to door* L.*)*

MARY. *(Behind table* R.C.*)* Bill, shall I send Simmons to help you?

WILLIAM. Simmons—yes—and tell him to hurry up. And Mary—tell Simmons I've got my *own* corkscrew. *(Exit* L.*)*

(Exit MARY R.*)*

BURROUGHS. Oh George—the disgrace—the disgrace. *(Enter* SIMMONS R.*)* Well, Simmons?

SIMMONS. Several gentlemen to see you, Sir.

BURROUGHS. Who are they?

SIMMONS. The Earl of Chuffleigh, sir—the Marquis of Harroween and Baron Holloway.

BURROUGHS. Show them in. *(Exit* SIMMONS.*)* Great Heavens! They've all heard the news. It's a delegation. They've come to protest against the degradation of our fair city.

GEORGE. Come to protest against my candidacy for Parliament—more likely. It's a big smash-up, Pater.

BURROUGHS. Well, it can't be helped. George, I shall die for shame.

(Enter EARL, MARQUIS, BARON, R.*)*

EARL. Hello! Hello! Hello! Burroughs! How d'ye do—how d'ye do?

BURROUGHS. *(Bowing)* Your lordship.

EARL. Don't know if you know the Marquis of Harroween.

BURROUGHS. *(Bowing)* Your lordship.

EARL. Baron Holloway.

BURROUGHS. *(Bowing)* Your lordship.

EARL. Well, here we are you know. Daresay you know what we've come for.

BURROUGHS. Alas, your Lordship, I fear I do, all too well. I beg you not to be too hard upon me.

EARL. Hard upon you. What the devil do you mean?

MARQUIS. I say, Chuff—what's the old Johnny talking about?

EARL. I don't know. We've come to see your son.

BURROUGHS. Eh?

EARL. Yes—yes—yes. The Champion, of course. Where is he?

BARON. Yes—trot him out—damn it.

BURROUGHS. Your Lordship!

MARQUIS. Yes—yes—yes. Where the deuce is he?

EARL. Look here, Burroughs—what the devil do you mean, keeping us in the dark like this, eh? What—what—what?

MARQUIS. Yes. What the deuce do you mean?

BURROUGHS. I'm distressed beyond measure your Lordship. But I assure you——

MARQUIS. Tut—tut—tut! That's a likely story—eh, Holloway?

BARON. I'm completely baffled.

BURROUGHS. Gentlemen—gentlemen! I beg you to believe that this prize fighter is none of my doing.

EARL. Eh, what—what—what! Fancy Mrs. Burroughs would have something to say to that,

what—what—what! *(They all laugh—and bus.)*

MARQUIS. Look here, Burroughs—what the deuce are you driving at?

BURROUGHS. I wouldn't have had it happen for the world.

EARL. Had what happen?

BURROUGHS. All this disgraceful publicity.

EARL. Look here, Burroughs—have you gone balmy! Here's the town of Knotley—town that is dear to all of us—goes and breeds the Champion of the world—damn it—and you keep it quiet for years. Burroughs it's dashed unpatriotic of you!

BURROUGHS. W-h-h-at?

EARL. And you call yourself an Englishman. What the devil do you mean by it?

MARQUIS. Precisely!

BARON. Exactly!

(Enter SIMMONS R.*)*

SIMMONS. The Mayor and a delegation.

(Enter MAYOR, *Board of Trade Delegation,* MOONEY *and* REPORTER, R.*)*

EARL, MARQUIS *and* BARON. Ah! The Mayor! Hello!—Cruikshank—how are you?

MAYOR. Your Lordship—gentlemen—Mr. Burroughs—our profound congratulations. We're here, of course, to see the Champion and to welcome him to his native Knotley in the name of the City and the Board of Trade. *(They all clap their hands, crying: "Bravo," etc.)* At a meeting of the Board of Trade last evening these gentlemen and myself were appointed a Committee to wait upon the Champion and request him to do us the honor of being our guest at a dinner at the Town Hall on some evening convenient to himself. *(Applause.)* Representing

as I do the Town of Knotley—I—but, where is he?

BURROUGHS. Eh?

MAYOR. Where is he, I say?

GEORGE. He's just dashed out for a moment.

MAYOR. Dashed out!

*(*WILLIAM *enters door* L. *with travelling bag and hat in hand.)*

EARL. Hello! Hello! Hello! This must be the Champion now.

MARQUIS. *(To* BARON*)* Yes—yes—yes, of course. Spot him anywhere. Looks just like his picture.

EARL. *(Crosses to* WILLIAM C.*)* My dear Sir—allow me the distinguished honor of shaking you by the hand—Earl of Chuffleigh, you know?

WILLIAM. *(Putting down bag and hat, shaking hands)* Why, certainly, Earl!

BURROUGHS. Good Heavens!

EARL. My friend the Marquis of Harroween—drinks damn bad whiskey, but a good fellow for all that.

MARQUIS. How do you do, Mr. Burroughs.

WILLIAM. *(Shaking hands)* Thanks, Marquis, I'm quite well.

MARQUIS. *(Wincing at handshake)* Ha—ha! Quite well. Droll fellow, eh, Chuffleigh? Quite well, ha! ha! Quite well! I should think he was.

EARL. Baron Holloway.

BARON. *(Shaking hands with* WILLIAM*)* Great occasion! Great occasion!

MOONEY. *(*R. *of* WILLIAM*)* The Mayor wants to shake hands with you. *(Bus.* WILLIAM *shakes hands with* MAYOR, *members of the Board of Trade, etc. Enter* MRS. BURROUGHS L. EARL, MARQUIS *and* BARON *see her and rush over to greet her.*

They all cross from L. *to* R. *Chatter is general from everybody—laughter—congratulations, etc.)*

EARL. And now, gentlemen—— *(Everybody is quiet and listens.)* Allow me to propose three hearty English cheers for the Champion of the world. All together now—Hip—hip—hip—— *(Omnes.)* Hurrah!

BARON. *(After others)* Hurrah!

MARQUIS. And now—allow me to propose—three hearty English cheers for the *mother* of the Champion of the world—and together now—Hip—hip—hip—— *(Omnes.)* Hurrah!

BARON. *(After others)* Hurrah!

WILLIAM. *(Seeing his father downhearted and dejected)* And now, gentlemen, allow me to propose, three hearty English cheers for the *father* of the Champion of the world! All together now—Hip—hip—hip—— *(Omnes.)* Hurrah!

BARON. *(After others)* Hurrah!

GEORGE. *(Comes down* C., *holds out hand to* WILLIAM*)* I say, Bill, old top—shake! By Gad—I always knew you were a winner. *(Business.)*

WILLIAM. Trust you to pick the winner, George. Gentlemen, I thank you very much and now—— *(Picking up his bag.)* I must be off.

EARL. I say—where are you going?

WILLIAM. I'm going to the Inn.

EARL. No room for the Champion in his father's house?

BURROUGHS. Really, your Lordship——

EARL. No, no. There's no possible defence—it's disgraceful. *(To* WILLIAM.*)* Here—I say—you'll come with me to the Grange.

BARON. Not a bit of it. Come and stay with me at the Manor.

MARQUIS. Absurd. You'll be my guest at the Castle.

EARL. My dear fellow—the Countess is most anxious to meet you.

BARON. Lady Holloway would be charmed.

(Board of Trade and REPORTER *exit* C. *to* L. BARON, MARQUIS *and* WILLIAM *turn and start to exit* C. MOONEY *and* MAYOR *pick up bag simultaneously and struggle for the possession of it.* EARL *rushes between them, drags the bag out of their hands.* MOONEY *and* MAYOR *exit followed by* EARL—*alone—carying the bag proudly, while* MR. BURROUGHS, *aghast, looks on. PICTURE.*

CURTAIN

ACT III

SCENE: *The same. But the room is entirely transformed. All the old stuffy furniture is gone. In its place is a lot of furniture which you would find in a Club Smoking room—easy leather chairs, 4 round tables with ash trays, match stands, glasses, whiskey bottles, etc., on tables. Boxing gloves, foils and other sporting things scattered about the room.*

At rise of curtain all the men are discovered sitting round the tables with glasses in their hands. MR. BURROUGHS *is standing* C. MARY *and* ANTOINETTE *are peeping in at back.*

Animated conversation heard as Curtain rises.

BURROUGHS. Yes—gentlemen. Positively that is the way it occurred.

MARQUIS. *(Who has been asleep—awakens suddenly)* Eh what—what! What's this? What occurred?

BURROUGHS. I was telling these gentlemen how my boy defeated K. O. Sweeney in their historic altercation at a place called Reno.

MAYOR. Reno? Where's that?

MOONEY. A suburb of Chicago.

BURROUGHS. To resume what I was saying—it was not until the eleventh period.

EARL. I say, you mean "round," don't you?—Round—not period.

BURROUGHS. Possibly that is so.

EARL. Well, say round then—say round. Period —my word!

BURROUGHS. Well, sir—as I was observing, in the eleventh—er—period my son struck K. O. Sweeney very severely in the abdomen—so severely that Mr. Sweeney lay down upon the floor to rest for a few moments. But it was not until the seventeenth period that my son struck him a knock in the cardiac region.

EARL. Gave him a right to the heart, didn't he?

BURROUGHS. Er—yes, your Lordship. Precisely.

EARL. Why the devil don't you say so.

BURROUGHS. Such was my intention, I assure you. And then—gentlemen—then came the final period. My son quickly executed a vertical movement with his unemployed glove, like this—and the swiftly moving glove encountered Mr. Sweeney in the region of the lower maxillary, so that he reclined somewhat hastily upon the floor, and—I am informed that he remained unconscious for a considerable period—er—round. *(Goes up back.)*

*(*MARY *and* ANTOINETTE *exit.)*

BARON. *(To* MARQUIS*)* Recites very well, doesn't he?

MARQUIS. I wonder if he knows "Gunga Din."

REPORTER. *(To* BURROUGHS*)* That was a great fight, Mr. Burroughs.

BURROUGHS. I'll say so.

(Enter WILLIAM R., *with two cocktail shakers in his hands which he shakes as he comes in. All the men greet him.)*

MARQUIS. Boys! What's the matter with Gunboat Williams?

ALL. He's all right.

MOONEY. Who's all right?

ALL. Gunboat Williams.

WILLIAM. And now, gentlemen—I want to introduce you to an American cocktail.

BARON. I've had the pleasure before.

WILLIAM. Hope you don't dislike them.

BARON. Best thing in the States.

WILLIAM. Perhaps not quite that but as an American invention it ranks with the telephone and the sewing machine.

MOONEY. *(Crosses to* C. *Taking one cocktail shaker from* WILLIAM*)* Allow me, Mr. Burroughs —this is more in my line. I'm going to introduce these to the Blue Cow. *(*MOONEY *and* WILLIAM *fill all the cocktail glasses around the table.)*

*(*MARQUIS *starts to sing "A Wee Doch and Doris" —the rest all join in and sing two verses. When it is finished* EARL *rises.)*

EARL. And now, gentlemen, to England! *(Everybody rises and drinks cocktail.)*

ALL. To England!

MARQUIS. *(Smacking his lips)* It has a message. *(Everybody sits except* EARL *and* WILLIAM.*)*

EARL. I say, how do you make them?

WILLIAM. One-third pep—two-thirds pluck—and a dash of generosity.

EARL. Do you mean to tell me the American people have legislated these things out of existence?

WILLIAM. They have.

EARL. My God! They don't deserve their freedom. Two or three more of these and I'd be a champion myself. Often think if I'd not been what I am I'd like to have been a fighter. Fact, often dream that I'm in the jolly old ring, you know, knocking out no end of chaps. *(He spars with*

WILLIAM *and falls in chair—is counted out—bell rings. Enter* MRS. BURROUGHS.*)* Ah! Enter the heroine of the evening!

MARQUIS. Madam—this must indeed be a proud night for you.

MRS. BURROUGHS. I thank your Lordship—it is.

WILLIAM. Gentlemen, you know how it is with mothers—they don't need much of an excuse to be proud of their sons.

MRS. BURROUGHS. It would be a still happier night if I were not to lose him again so soon.

ALL. *(Bus.)* What—going away—so soon—leaving us, etc., etc.

MRS. BURROUGHS. He leaves us to-morrow on his way back to his duties in America.

EARL. That's a pity.

MRS. BURROUGHS. And now, gentlemen—I leave you to your merry-making.

MARQUIS. What's that? You're not going to dine with us?

MRS. BURROUGHS. Oh no—all the ladies of the household have dined already.

BURROUGHS. Yes—gentlemen. We thought it best to make a purely stag affair.

EARL. Devilish poor idea—in my opinion. I'm always strong for the chiffon myself. *(Everybody laughs.)*

MRS. BURROUGHS. Gentlemen, will you go in to dinner?

MARQUIS. *(Crosses to* MRS. BURROUGHS. *Takes her hand)* Will the mother of the Champion do us the honor to show us the way?

MRS. BURROUGHS. With pleasure. *(*MARQUIS *starts to sing*: *"Here's to the Maiden," and when the chorus is reached they all dance out singing, leaving* BURROUGHS *and* WILLIAM *on stage.)*

BURROUGHS. *(Breathless, at the door—*R.*)* Are you coming, William?

WILLIAM. *(L.)* I want to talk to you first, Father.

BURROUGHS. Why, certainly—my dear son.

WILLIAM. I've been thinking that all this is rather rough on you.

BURROUGHS. What can you mean?

WILLIAM. All this advertisement of your disgrace.

BURROUGHS. Disgrace?

WILLIAM. It will all be in the Knotley Guardian to-morrow.

BURROUGHS. Rather! Mr.—Endall is here now. I gave him a complete list of all the guests, and a copy of my photo for the Knotley Guardian.

WILLIAM. Father—you're awfully nice about it.

BURROUGHS. Eh?

WILLIAM. When I know how you must be suffering.

BURROUGHS. Suffering?

WILLIAM. Of course—flying in the face of all your principles like this. It's just as you said—you'll never be able to hold up your head in this community again. But I'll tell you what I'm going to do. By and by I'll have to make a speech, I suppose, and when I do, I'm going to set you right. I'm going to say: "Gentlemen: My father, under all his smiles, is really boiling with indignation. He really thinks I am a disgrace and that you're a lot of scandalous old sports who would be run out of the community if the Town had any spunk. He thinks——"

BURROUGHS. For God's sake, my son, don't—don't—have you gone mad? What on earth would they think?

WILLIAM. Don't you want me to tell the truth?

BURROUGHS. God forbid. Besides, it wouldn't be the truth.

WILLIAM. Then, you're not ashamed of me?

BURROUGHS. Ashamed of you? What an idea! Why, the Earl was saying to me this very morning, that he wished he had such a son, and the Marquis clapped his hands and cried: "Bravo!"

WILLIAM. Cried "Bravo!" did he?

BURROUGHS. Yes—yes.

WILLIAM. Cried Bravo! The Marquis? Did he? Well—well! I have not lived in vain. *(They exit* R.*—arms around each other. Applause heard off* R. SIMMONS *enters* C. *with* SMITH.*)*

SMITH. It's all right—I tell you it's all right.

SIMMONS. *(*R.*)* I'll let Mr. William know you are here, sir—but I'm afraid he can't see you.

SMITH. Anything the matter with his eyes?

SIMMONS. Oh, no, sir!

SMITH. Then it's all right. Tell him that Frank Smith of Mexico is here and would like to see him. Give him that card.

SIMMONS. But his father's entertaining some guests.

SMITH. That's all right. I don't want to see his father. I want to see him. Get me! *(As* SIMMONS *stares.)* Oh, go on, Fatty Arbuckle, and tell him! *(*SIMMONS *exits* R.U. SMITH *in disgust.)* Now I know why Ireland wants her freedom.

*(*MARY *and* ANTOINETTE *run on from* R.C. *giggling —they run into* SMITH.*)*

MARY. Oh! I beg your pardon.

ANTOINETTE. Pardon, M'sieur.

SMITH. Don't mention it, ladies.

MARY. Are you a guest?

SMITH. I'm here on a sort of mission.

MARY. Are you from America?

SMITH. Yes. I'm an American.

ANTOINETTE. Ah! Americaine.

SMITH. That's it—a merry cane.

*(*WILLIAM *enters* R.U., *card in hand. Turns to the two girls.)*

WILLIAM. Will you children run away and play —Mr. Smith wants to talk with me on business. *(The girls giggle and exit* C.*)* So, are you Frank Smith!

SMITH. Yes, sir—are you the Hon. William Burroughs!

WILLIAM. Guilty.

SMITH. Shake! I'm glad to meet a real human being.

WILLIAM. Heard of you—hardly thought to meet you here for the first time.

SMITH. *Is* funny how things turn out—lucky I happened to be in Boston when your partner wired our office—caught the next boat and here I am.

WILLIAM. Have a good crossing?

SMITH. Fine! Came on a wet boat. Get my wireless?

WILLIAM. Yes. I was expecting you here tonight. My partner cables that you were the engineer in charge of a mine called the Silver Girl.

SMITH. That's right—bossed that job eight years.

WILLIAM. You were there when the mine shut down?

SMITH. I sure was.

WILLIAM. And you met Lord Brockington there?

SMITH. Yes—saw his high and mightiness every day for a week of so.

(Hunting song heard off.)

WILLIAM. Some friends of mine. Come on in and meet some English noblemen.

SMITH. I met that big fat guy.

WILLIAM. Oh, he's the butler. *(They both exit* R.U.*)*

(Singing continues. Enter BROCKINGTON *and* ANTOINETTE—C.*)*

BROCKINGTON. What's that?

ANTOINETTE. Mr. Burroughs is giving a party in honor of his son.

BROCKINGTON. Oh, in honor of the candidate for Parliament.

(Enter LADY ELIZABETH.*)*

LADY ELIZABETH. Mademoislle, will you kindly tell Simmons to ask Mr. William Burroughs if he will be good enough to come here?

ANTOINETTE. Certainment, Milady. Pardon, Milord. *(Exit* R.*)*

BROCKINGTON. What d'ye want with him?

LADY ELIZABETH. He has often expressed a desire to meet you.

BROCKINGTON. Really? So the old bird is banqueting the gold fish?

LADY ELIZABETH. These people are my friends. I am their guest—and I won't have you speak disparagingly of them. If you have come to apologize——

BROCKINGTON. I haven't—I've come to give you an ultimatum.

LADY ELIZABETH. Really?

BROCKINGTON. I will not brook any further interference in my management of your affairs—d'ye understand?

LADY ELIZABETH. What *are* you talking about?

BROCKINGTON. Come—come—don't try to bluff me!

LADY ELIZABETH. Freddy, I give you my word—

BROCKINGTON. Do you mean to tell me you don't know that a detective agency has been inquiring into my management of your business?

LADY ELIZABETH. Certainly not.

BROCKINGTON. I don't believe you.

LADY ELIZABETH. Freddy, I give you my word I know nothing about it.

BROCKINGTON. Well, it doesn't matter a damn to me whether you know it or not—it's a fact. Now, the point is this—*(Enter* WILLIAM R.*)*—either you have it stopped at once or I wash my hands of your affairs for good and all. You can take your choice.

LADY ELIZABETH. Certainly. It shall be stopped at once. *(Introducing.)* Mr. William Burroughs—Lord Brockington.

BROCKINGTON. How d'ye do?

WILLIAM. How d'ye do. Lady Elizabeth, you sent for me.

LADY ELIZABETH. Yes—you said you wanted to meet Lord Brockington. *(Goes up stage.)*

WILLIAM. I did. So you are Lord Brockington. You are Lady Elizabeth's trustee—and you have reported to her for the past three years that Silver Girl has suspended paying dividends.

BROCKINGTON. Is that any business of yours?

WILLIAM. Lady Elizabeth, I have one or two things to say to Lord Brockington and I should be very glad if you'd allow me to say them in private.

LADY ELIZABETH. I'm sorry, but there's been too much going on of late in private. May I stay? *(*LADY ELIZABETH *goes up* L. BROCKINGTON *crosses to* L.*)*

WILLIAM. As you wish. *(Enter* SIMMONS.*)* Simmons, tell Mr. Smith I should like to speak to him a moment. *(To* BROCKINGTON.*)* You see, sir, there's a gentleman here who has come quite a long way to see you.

SIMMONS. *(Announcing)* Mr. Smith.

SMITH. *(To* SIMMONS*)* What do you want?

WILLIAM. Simmons, look after Mr. Smith's lug-

gage. *(Exit* SIMMONS C.*)* Smith, I believe you have met his Lordship.

SMITH. *(Crosses to* BROCKINGTON. *Offers hand)* How are you, Lord Brockington?

BROCKINGTON. You have the advantage of me, sir.

SMITH. *(C.)* Oh, I guess not—I'm Frank Smith. Superintendent of the Silver Girl.

BROCKINGTON. *(L.)* I don't remember you at all, sir.

SMITH. Is that so? Saw you every day for a week three years ago in Mexico—I guess you remember being there.

BROCKINGTON. Certainly I was there—strange I don't recall you.

WILLIAM. *(R. up stage. Cheerfully)* Almost incredible!

BROCKINGTON. See here, Burroughs, if you've had anything to do with this confounded interference in my affairs, allow me to tell you——

WILLIAM. One moment, please, let's get through with Mr. Smith—then we'll come to me.

BROCKINGTON. No, sir—no—I'll not be dictated to by any third rate——

LADY ELIZABETH. Freddy—Freddy—let's hear what the man has to say.

WILLIAM. Smith, what was the condition of the mine up to the time Lord Brockington came there?

SMITH. Great—continuous production record for over ten years.

WILLIAM. What were its prospects?

SMITH. Swell! Tests showed high-grade ore enough to keep two shifts going for three years sure, and nobody knows how much longer.

BROCKINGTON. That's a damned lie!

SMITH. *(Bristling up for a fight)* What!

WILLIAM. That's not *your* end of this!

SMITH. Hornswoggled hippopotamus!

WILLIAM. Got any evidence!

SMITH. *(Producing document)* Sworn statement of Haskell, Bryant & Haskell, certified accountants, Boston, showing operations since opening of the mine. *(Produces second document.)* Sworn estimate of future prospects signed by Dolan & Hopkins, mining engineers, New York.

BROCKINGTON. I tell you I employed the best engineers in America and they all assured me the mine was worked out.

WILLIAM. Mind telling us who they were?

BROCKINGTON. *(Furiously)* I don't intend to answer any questions from you, sir.

LADY ELIZABETH. Who were they, Freddy?

BROCKINGTON. *(Dashed by her attitude)* Do you mean to say you are going to allow this impudent fellow to cross-examine me?

LADY ELIZABETH. I confess I see no harm in your identifying these engineers.

BROCKINGTON. Why, I don't recall their names off-hand—I have their report in my office.

WILLIAM. *(To* SMITH*)* Ever see any engineers around the mine except Dolan and Hopkins?

SMITH. No, sir.

WILLIAM. Would it have been possible for any other engineers to have examined the mine without your knowing it.

SMITH. Not much! Couldn't be done.

WILLIAM. Perhaps Lady Elizabeth would like to know what his Lordship did at the mine.

LADY ELIZABETH. I should—very much.

WILLIAM. That's your end of it, Smith.

SMITH. Went all through it—asked a lot of questions—and finally ordered me to suspend operations, close the mine up and put in a keeper—all of which I did.

WILLIAM. Did he give any reasons?

BROCKINGTON. Certainly I did. I told this man

—*(Indicating* SMITH.*)*—that my engineers told me the mine could no longer be worked at a profit.

WILLIAM. I thought you didn't remember Mr. Smith.

BROCKINGTON. Well, I didn't at first.

WILLIAM. But now you do?

BROCKINGTON. Yes.

WILLIAM. Glad your memory is improving. How's *your* memory working, Smith?

SMITH. Ball-bearing!

WILLIAM. Does your memory agree with his Lordship's on this point?

SMITH. Nix.

WILLIAM. How so?

SMITH. His Lordship told me he was closing up the mine because of complications in the management of the estate—but that it would be re-opened in a few months.

WILLIAM. How did that strike you?

SMITH. I thought it was nonsense and said so.

WILLIAM. What did his Lordship say to that?

SMITH. Told me to mind my own business.

WILLIAM. And then what did you do?

SMITH. Minded my own business.

BROCKINGTON. What nonsense! Betty, I ask you—did you ever hear such a silly piece of drivel? Your father owned about three quarters of this mine—and if I had closed it up under such circumstances, don't you suppose the holders of the remaining quarter interest would have raised an outcry you could hear from New York to London?

WILLIAM. Well, Smith—what about it?

SMITH. Well, sir, I heard that while Lord Brockington was in New York he bought up pretty much all the loose shares that were floating about. Of course the price dropped when the mine shut down.

WILLIAM. Well—well—that's interesting.

LADY ELIZABETH. Freddy, do you own any shares in the Silver Girl?

BROCKINGTON. Why, yes, a few—why not?

WILLIAM. Yes, of course, why not? Wish I owned a few myself. *(SMITH and WILLIAM laugh.)*

SMITH. Me too!

WILLIAM. Er—did you buy these shares before you closed the mine or afterward?

BROCKINGTON. What difference does that make?

WILLIAM. Excuse me—but aren't you a little dense? Do you wish to ask Mr. Smith any questions?

BROCKINGTON. I will not degrade myself to that extent.

WILLIAM. Smith, is there anything you would like to ask his Lordship?

SMITH. No! I don't want to talk to him!

WILLIAM. Well, then, Smith, we'll excuse you. Go in and meet some more Englishmen.

SMITH. I don't want to meet anybody. *(Exit* R.*)*

WILLIAM. *(Calling after him)* Get acquainted with Mr. Mooney. He's done more for me than any other man in England.

BROCKINGTON. *(Bursting out)* Betty, why don't you turn this fellow out? Are you going to stand there and hear my integrity impeached with a lot of silly lies and never open your mouth about it? *(No answer.)* Well—well—why don't you speak?

LADY ELIZABETH. *(Sorrowfully)* Freddy—Freddy!

WILLIAM. And now, dear Lady Elizabeth, I really think that what remains to be said had best be said in your absence.

LADY ELIZABETH. I quite agree with you. *(Exit through window* L.*)*

BROCKINGTON. I've nothing further to say to you, sir.

WILLIAM. Ah, but I have to you.

BROCKINGTON. Well, what have you got to say?

WILLIAM. Just this—You are a blackguard and a thief.

*(*BROCKINGTON *lunges at* WILLIAM. *He ducks and escapes the blow.)*

BROCKINGTON. Really, one can't get into a vulgar brawl in a total stranger's house.

WILLIAM. We have a garden, and it's a moonlight night.

BROCKINGTON. You! Ha—ha—ha! Well—well—that's an idea—dashed good idea, too. Pity you're not a little bigger.

WILLIAM. Oh, that'll be all right. Will you do me the honor?

BROCKINGTON. Yes, I'll do you the honor, and I'll do it so well that her ladyship won't recognize you. Come on. *(He laughs loudly and exits* C. *to* R. *As he exits, takes off his coat.)*

*(*WILLIAM *stands for a moment thinking. Takes ring off his finger—takes off his coat and exits whistling. Enter* DAVID, C. *from* L. *followed by* SIMMONS *carrying suitcase. They come down stage.)*

DAVID. What's he taking off his coat for?

SIMMONS. I suppose he's hot, sir.

DAVID. Hot?

SIMMONS. Yes, sir. I trust you enjoyed your stay in London, Mister David.

DAVID. Very much, thanks. Yes. *(He looks round room.)* Good Heavens—Simmons—what's the meaning of all this?

SIMMONS. It's the master's idea, sir.

DAVID. Eh?

SIMMONS. *(Puts down bag, goes to table* L., *and*

arranges bottles on table) Oh yes, sir. We've made a change or two since you've been gone, sir.

DAVID. I should think so. What's that you have in your hand?

SIMMONS. Whiskey, sir.

DAVID. Whiskey in this house?

SIMMONS. Oh yes, sir!

DAVID. I shan't believe it till I taste it.

SIMMONS. Oh, sir—I assure you.

DAVID. I say I shan't believe it till I taste it.

SIMMONS. Yes, sir. Quite so, sir. *(Bus. with bottle and glass.)* Will you say sufficient, sir?

DAVID. Say what?

SIMMONS. Sufficient—sir.

DAVID. What for?

SIMMONS. When it's sufficient, sir.

DAVID. Oh-h-h! Sufficient!

SIMMONS. *(Bus.)* Soda, sir? *(Bus.)*

DAVID. Thanks. *(Bus.)* Sufficient! *(Bus. of drinking.)* Well, now—tell me—what's the meaning of all this?

SIMMONS. Your father is giving a party.

DAVID. In honor of my return?

SIMMONS. Well, you see it's this way, sir. *(Voices heard off.)*

MARQUIS. *(Off stage)* I say, when is that son of yours coming in?

SIMMONS. Excuse me, sir—they may be wanting something. *(Exit* R.*)*

MARQUIS. *(Off stage)* I say, old top—when is that son of yours coming in?

DAVID. Bless my soul, I mustn't keep them waiting. *(Applause heard off stage.)* I'm coming—I'm coming. *(Exit* R.*)*

(Enter WILLIAM, *whistling and putting on his coat. He pulls the bell. Enter* LADY ELIZABETH.*)*

LADY ELIZABETH. Mr. Burroughs!

WILLIAM. Yes?

LADY ELIZABETH. I saw it all.

WILLIAM. You did?

LADY ELIZABETH. Yes!

WILLIAM. I'm awfully sorry.

LADY ELIZABETH. I think you're wonderful? Aren't you hurt?

WILLIAM. Oh, no!

LADY ELIZABETH. Ah, you *are* a champion!

(Enter SIMMONS.*)*

WILLIAM. Simmons, you'll find a—a person in the garden. Do what you can for him. *(Exit* SIMMONS.*)* Don't worry—he's not seriously hurt—just feels a little cut up.

LADY ELIZABETH. I'm not worrying about him. Whatever he got, he deserved it. But how on earth did you find out about him?

WILLIAM. Well, father always said George was a clever lawyer.

LADY ELIZABETH. Do you mean to say your brother did all this?

(Enter GEORGE.*)*

GEORGE. What ho! Committee of one to find out what's become of the guest of honor.

WILLIAM. Thanks, old man. I'm coming right away.

GEORGE. Not that you're missing much, dear old delightful. The Pater's making a speech. Oh, he's in rare form. But I say, Bill, jolly good tip you gave me. I've tried it on already.

WILLIAM. Any luck?

GEORGE. By Jove—yes! We had a spiffing old row about your big fight, you know. I stood right

up to him. Sorry you weren't there to hear me—by Jove I am.

WILLIAM. That's the stuff, George. Father's all right, only he's had his way too much—and that's bad for anyone—don't you think so, Lady Elizabeth?

GEORGE. I'm afraid Lady Elizabeth is having a rather dull evening.

LADY ELIZABETH. On the contrary, it's the most exciting evening of my whole life! *(Crossing to* GEORGE.*)* And I want to thank you for a very, very great service.

GEORGE. What service?

LADY ELIZABETH. Oh, don't play the modest violet any longer. I know now it was really you who exposed my cousin.

GEORGE. Who said I did?

LADY ELIZABETH. Your brother.

GEORGE. That's just like dear old Bill. He did the bally investigating himself. Oh, I did some of the running, but it was all Bill's idea. He wanted me to take the credit of it—thought it would give me a sort of standing as a lawyer. *(Crosses to* WILLIAM.*)* But it won't work, Bill. You've taught me one thing, dear old precious—a chap's got to stand on his own feet—or else he might—er—jolly well sit down.

WILLIAM. Bully for you, George. We'll make a man of you yet.

GEORGE. *(Shaking* BILL'S *hand)* No—will you really, Bill? That will be awfully good of you. *(Crosses up* L.*)*

LADY ELIZABETH. And you weren't going to tell me. Do you think that's fair?

WILLIAM. Well, I thought you might not care to be under obligations—no matter how slight—to a prize fighter.

LADY ELIZABETH. What a snob you must think me!

(Enter BARON, MAYOR, MOONEY, REPORTER—R.*)*

BARON. I say, why aren't you at your own bally dinner?

WILLIAM. I was just coming back.

LADY ELIZABETH. I'm afraid it's all my fault.

MAYOR. Cherchez la femme! When in doubt look for the lady.

(Enter BURROUGHS, EARL *and others*—R.*)*

EARL. *(To* WILLIAM*)* Mr. Burroughs, will you answer me one question frankly?

WILLIAM. Why, certainly.

EARL. Your father informs me that you are an American citizen. Is that so?

WILLIAM. Father is right—as usual.

MAYOR. Well—here we are—gathered together to celebrate a British triumph and, dash it all—it turns out we're shouting our heads off for America!

WILLIAM. And what of it, sir?

MAYOR. Eh?

WILLIAM. America's my home. All that I have she's given me. My home, my friends, my property. I expect to live with her till I die. Shouldn't I be a pretty ungrateful sort of a chap if I didn't do what little I could for her when she's done so much for me?

EARL. Something in what you say, sir. Bound to admit it.

MAYOR. Mighty good remarks, I'll say.

GEORGE. Yes, he gets them from father.

MAYOR. Gentlemen—a few minutes ago the Champion drank with us to England. Now let us

honor him by all singing the American National Anthem.

ALL. Yes, of course—certainly, etc., etc.

WILLIAM. Thank you. Now, all together.

*(*MOONEY *starts singing "Yankee Doodle." Stops on "stuck a feather in his hat."* MARQUIS *starts "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean." They all join in and sing two lines and then stop.* BARON *sings "Stuck a feather in his hat and called him macaroni." Enter* SMITH R.*)*

SMITH. What's that?

WILLIAM. Singing the American National Anthem. They know it about as well as we do. And now, gentlemen, you've been very kind to me. Will you do one more thing to please me?

EARL, MARQUIS, BARON. Certainly! Give it a name, etc., etc.

WILLIAM. Well, as you know, my brother is running for Parliament. Will you back him for the office?

EARL. *(Hesitatingly)* H-m-m, well—you see—the difficulty is—he's a Conservative—and most of us are of the Liberal contingent. *(*GEORGE *crosses to* R. C.*)*

WILLIAM. Yes, but George is a Liberal Conservative, you know.

GEORGE. Yes, by Jove. I'm frightfully Liberal.

MOONEY. But what I want to know is—are you for Prohibition?

GEORGE. Yes.

MAYOR. What?

GEORGE. No.

MAYOR *and* MOONEY. What?

GEORGE. Er—er—yes and no, gentlemen.

MAYOR. He's a mug of half-and-half.

GEORGE. *(To* EARL*)* Well, you see, your Lordship—it's this way.

EARL. Oh politics is all a lot of bally rot anyhow.

WILLIAM. What do you say, Earl?

EARL. I'll swallow brother George if the rest of you chaps are willing. What do you say, Holloway?

BARON. Right-o Chuffleigh! I'll—swallow him. What do you say, Harroween?

MARQUIS. Oh, very well. I've swallowed a lot of worse pills.

(Enter BROCKINGTON C.*—with* SIMMONS*—from Garden.* BROCKINGTON *very much battered up.)*

EARL. Hello! Hello! Hello! Why it's Brockington.

BARON. I say—what Ho! Freddy!

EARL. What the deuce have you been up to?

BROCKINGTON. I—I—er—met with a slight accident.

EARL. Not so dashed slight—what!

WILLIAM. Lord Brockington was thrown from his horse, you see.

EARL. Ah—I see. Since when have you taken to riding in your dress clothes, Brockington? Come, —come! You've been in a jolly old fight.

BARON. Freddy—you're a sight.

EARL. How did it happen, Freddy?

BROCKINGTON. I tell you it was an accident.

EARL. Tut—tut—tut! Might as well make a clean breast of it.

BROCKINGTON. Thanks, Chuffleigh—not just now. So, if you'll excuse me—— *(Picks up coat from chair* R. *and starts to exit.)*

BURROUGHS. My dear Lord Brockington, you really must accept my hospitality.

BROCKINGTON. Thanks. I've had all of your hospitality I want. Good-night.

DAVID. *(Back of table* R.*)* Oh, I've got it!

BURROUGHS. What?

DAVID. He has been having a little debate with Gunboat Williams. *(Everybody laughs.)*

EARL. Oh, I say, Brockington. Little debate with Gunboat Williams! Oh, you royal old ass!

BROCKINGTON. What's that about Gunboat Williams? *(Business.)*

WILLIAM. Some people call me that.

BROCKINGTON. Good God!

WILLIAM. Yes.

BROCKINGTON. Oh, I say! *(Bus. He exits quickly* C. *to* L. *Everybody laughs as he exits.)*

SMITH. *(Comes down—takes* WILLIAM'S *hand and laughs)* Good boy!

BURROUGHS. Really, I wouldn't have had this happen for the world.

EARL. Nonsense. That chap's been going about licking chaps for years. Awfully clever boxer, you know. First fight he ever lost—— *(To* WILLIAM.*)* I say, old chap, do tell us about it.

WILLIAM. Well, you see, Lord Brockington and I differed as to how a certain game should be played.

EARL. What game?

WILLIAM. Well, in America we call it "confidence."

EARL. What about this confidence game?

WILLIAM. I'll tell you all about it while we are having our coffee. *(They all sing: "Drink, Puppy, Drink" and exit* R.*)*

SMITH. What's the matter with those guys?

WILLIAM. They're singing.

SMITH. Oh, is that so? *(Business.)* Are you sure they were only singing?

WILLIAM. Sure.

SMITH. You don't say. *(Exit* R.*)*

(Enter LADY ELIZABETH L.*)*

LADY ELIZABETH. I'm greatly indebted to your friend from America.

WILLIAM. Oh, Smith! He's all right.

LADY ELIZABETH. Do you still think me a snob?

WILLIAM. No—no! Not at all! Never did! Now that I think of it—I can think of a whole flock of fighters that I shouldn't care to have you under obligation to. But—well, I suppose a fellow can't help feeling a little differently about himself. Hope you'll overlook it. I'm off to-morrow—and I shouldn't wonder if I never saw you again. But you've been mighty sweet to me. I suppose it's just your nature—you're kind to everyone. Well, it's the sort of thing a fellow never forgets.

LADY ELIZABETH. Is it?

WILLIAM. Not this fellow, anyhow. And—well I guess that's about all. So it's good-bye and God bless you—whatever you do and wherever you are.

LADY ELIZABETH. Oh, but I'm going to see you again.

WILLIAM. You are?

LADY ELIZABETH. Yes, I'm going to America.

WILLIAM. You don't say so?

LADY ELIZABETH. Yes, on my honeymoon.

WILLIAM. Oh, that will be fine. You'll be sure and look me up—you and your husband—won't you? I'll just turn America inside out for you—and your husband.

LADY ELIZABETH. It may interest you to know that if I ever do marry, I'm going to marry an American.

WILLIAM. You don't say so.

LADY ELIZABETH. I do say so.

WILLIAM. Well, that's immense. You'll have me singing "Yankee Doodle" in a minute. I must give you my address. *(Gives her his card.)* Then—well

—then—you'll have it—you and your husband.

LADY ELIZABETH. *(Reading card)* 156 Elm Street, New Haven, Connecticut.

WILLIAM. I've a charming little home there—bit lonely sometimes—but you must come and see it—and—and your husband—— I suppose you'll spend some time in New York.

LADY ELIZABETH. Yes, but that won't be my permanent address.

WILLIAM. No?

LADY ELIZABETH. Shall I give it to you?

WILLIAM. Will you?

LADY ELIZABETH. *(Reading card)* 156 Elm Street, New Haven, Connecticut.

WILLIAM. Lady Elizabeth!

LADY ELIZABETH. Yes?

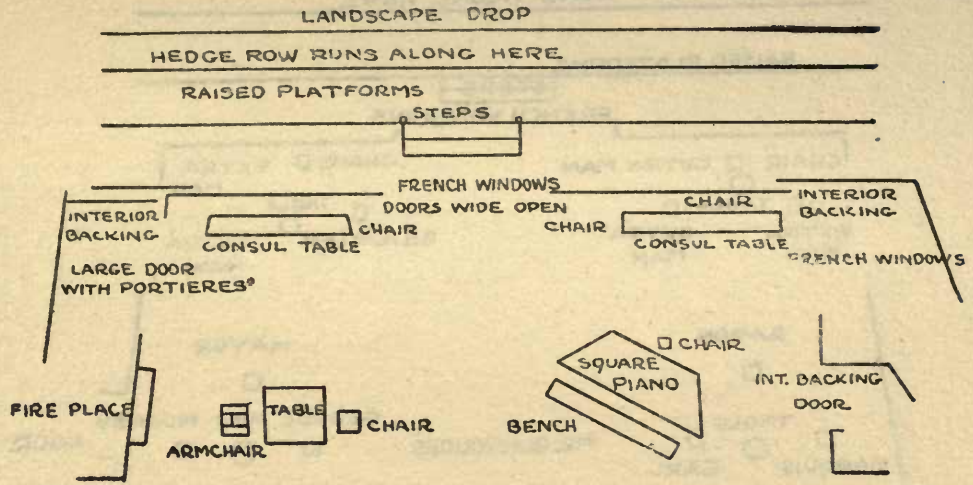
WILLIAM. You don't say so!

LADY ELIZABETH. I do say so.

WILLIAM. *(About to embrace her, takes ring out of his pocket, puts it on her finger)* Back to the ring! Lady Gunboat Williams.

LADY ELIZABETH. I'll say so! *(They embrace.)*

CURTAIN



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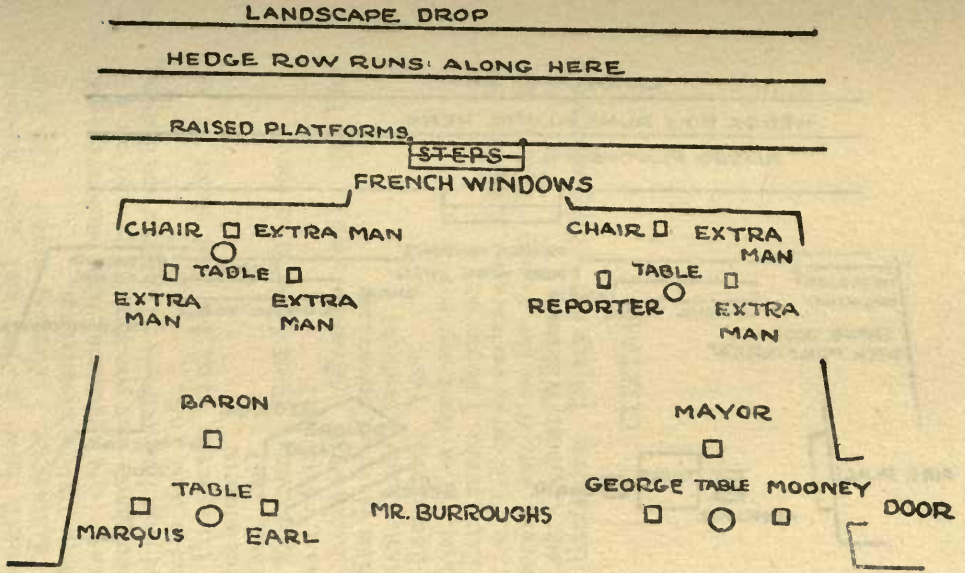

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